KONARKA

Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra



Translation

Sudhansu Sekhar Rath

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LARK BOOKS

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KONARKA

Originally written in Odia by
Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra

Translated by
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Edited by
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Konarka Temple Complex – As it is seen today

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Naga and Nagi (The Naga Couple) - on the plinth of the temple These hybrid figures are considered as celestial beings.

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KONARKA TEMPLE COMPLEX (MUKHASHALA AND NATYA MANDIRA)

COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

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A FEW WORDS.........

KONARKA was written by Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra almost 100 years ago, in Odia language, especially for the Odias, to remind them of their heritage of such a highly developed skill in ancient temple architecture, sculpture and construction engineering which, even today, surprises the most eminent architects and engineers of the world.

I consider it as one of the best books on Konarka ever written in any language in terms of extraction of historical facts from legends, epics and other sources considered irrelevant by others, logical analysis, drawing of definite and bold inferences, use of the nomenclature given in the ancient manuals of temple architecture of Odisha and finally, for his writing style.

Taking one example of his bold statements, Pandit Mishra identifies the temple on the south-west side of the main temple of Konarka as that of Ramachandi when many other historians of the past and the present identify this temple differently like, the old sun temple built by Purandara Keshari, the temple of Buddha's mother Mayadevi, the temple of Sun God's wife, Chhaya, or even just as a model built for pre-visualization of the temple that was finally built. In my opinion, it cannot be the temple built by Purandara Keshari as the sculptural art it is decorated with is of very high standard and it was not possible to attain such perfection in the 9th century. It also cannot be the temple of the wife of the Sun, Chhaya, as the place for the consort of the prime deity of a temple is always located at the north-west side of the temple. According to Vastu Shastra, the north-west area is the area for the subordinates and friends whereas the south-west area primarily belongs to the administrator of the place. Again, as per the tradition of the Hindus, the wife is always seated on the left side of the husband. Hence, had it been goddess Chhaya's temple it would have been at the north-west and not at the south-west corner. Considering the other alternative, it could not have been a model for pre-visualization as it seems too big and too elaborate for the purpose and was not built like a chariot. Pandit Mishra has already proved it not being the temple of Mayadevi, Buddha's mother. Regarding the images of the Sun being used as Parshwa Devatas, Well! Considering the



A DEVOTEE COMING TO THE TEMPLE WITH FLOWERS

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A DAILY LABOURER COUPLE WITH THEIR CHILD

Parshwa Devatas of the main temple, perhaps to be in consonance with the theme of the complex, during reconstruction the sculptors of Konarka might have gone one step further and placed the images of the Sun as Parshwa Devata on the temple of Ramachandi. Therefore, I feel Pandit Mishra is absolutely right in identifying it as the temple of Ramachandi, the administrator of the temple complex of Konarka. However, I am no historian. It is just an opinion based on my personal analysis of the above facts and the respective legends, since I consider legends as the larger than life versions of history.

The day I finished reading Konarka, the original Odia book, I thought of translating it into English for its wider circulation and appreciation. However, I was a bit scared to do so as I was apprehensive of my ability to execute the job properly. Finally, I made up my mind and with a prayer to Late Pandit Mishra, who happens to be my grandfather, I started the job.

It was not easy for me. It was also quite risky as I did not know if I could project the same style, feelings and emotions that Pandit Mishra incorporated into the original Odia version of the book. The original book is written like a transcript of a long oral presentation given in one go,with lots of emotions and feelings of nationalism infused into it, and at the same time maintaining throughout a constant and sharp focus on its core subject. Added to the difficulty was the then contemporary version of the Odia language, the medieval terms used and locating the original source materials from which the excerpts were used in the book as references. At certain places Pandit Mishra has been a bit harsh in expressing his opinion on the erring historians while reasoning them out. In this translated version I have tried my best to maintain the spirit, the style, the feelings and the emotions of the original book. I only hope that I have been able to retain these at least to a manageable level.

The book was originally written for Odia people who are naturally familiar with Odia culture and tradition. To make it a little easier for the other readers to comprehend the subject matter, I have added a few photographs, maps, sketches, appendices, statements and explanations (mostly below the photographs) to this first extended English edition.

Another purpose of translating the book to English is to kick start the activity of further discussions and research about Konarka and especially about its surrounding area which has a very interesting background since the ancient days. The research activity related to Konarka and its surrounding area has come to a halt and now

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people are busy thinking only about its restoration and conservation. I hope this book will rekindle the fire and the research activity will start to roll again and gather momentum soon to bring more facts to light.

I have added some photographs of the possible locations of the iron beam and metal hook manufacturing workshop (Page 236), Shibei Santara's once existing residence (Page 239) and the possible path of the waterway (Page 37) that was used to carry the stone blocks and other heavy materials to the construction site of the temple. Of course, all the descriptions given here are based on the information collected from the local people, which has been transferred to them by word of mouth down the generations since the days the temple of Konarka was being constructed, and is supported partially by some physical evidences still existing in the ruins. These facts need to be thoroughly investigated by the historians to bring out a clearer and larger picture of Konarka and its surrounding area. Unlike in the case of Konarka the research about the pyramids of Egypt is still continuing. Every now and then the old mysteries are being solved and some new ones discovered to be solved in future. However, in case of Konarka, practically no further research is being conducted to find answers to many unanswered questions about it. It may be a difficult task, but, as history shows us the road that leads to our future, how difficult be it may, the scholars, apart from making all efforts to restore and conserve the monument on priority basis, must also work in the direction of revealing the full history of Konarka and its surrounding area.


A HUNTING SCENE

I am grateful to the Orissa State Archives for providing me with some of the essential and rare reference materials, to Sri Asutosh P. Patnaik (Author of the book "The Early Voyagers of the East") for imparting some valuable information about the villages around Konarka, to Sri Harischandra Dash of Konark Museum (Archaeological Survey of India) and to Sri Shayama Sundar Maharana (Sculptor) for their help in tracing out the important locations in and around Konarka. I am also grateful to Sri A. K. Patel (Superintending Archaeologist, Archaeological Survey of India - Bhubaneswar), Sri Deorao Krishnarap Lokhande of ASI-Bhubaneswar, Sri Gopala Krushna Mishra (Senior Journalist), Sri P. K. Mishra (Scientist-ORSAC), Sri Brajanath Mishra and Sri Sibasundar Rath (Grandsons of Pandit Mishra) for helping me at different stages during preparation of the manuscript. I am greatly indebted to Padma Bhushan Sri Ramakanta Rath for taking the trouble of going through the draft of the book for editing the proof.

Lastly, I herewith dedicate this book to my dear father Late Satchidananda Rath whose sacrifice, love and affection helped me to be myself irrespective of what I was or what I am today.

I would hope that this work, notwithstanding its shortcomings, brings home to its readers the glory and also along with it Pandit Mishra's scholarship.

August 29, 2014
Bhubaneswar

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RAVI (THE SUN GOD)
A detached sculpture of the Sun sitting in lotus pose (Padmashana) once adorning the main temple

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THE AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

Among the people of Odisha Konarka is known as a holy place. However, it is a matter of regret that, with the decaying sense of spiritualism, the holy image of Konarka is also vanishing gradually from the minds of the people. Very few Odias realise that, for them, Konarka is the pillar of pride, the eternal example of their ultimate sculptural skill, the expression of their highly developed mental state and a bright example of national pride. Many scholars, thinkers and curious visitors from the country and abroad take the pain to come to Konarka, feel happy observing the huge temple standing at a deserted corner, even in its present deformed and ruined condition. Observing the present state of the Odias, it is not surprising that some people doubt the fact that, 'Konarka is the brainchild of the Odias.' Even, the Odias now, having lost their self-confidence and faith in themselves, have started to think that Bishwakarma himself built Konarka. The fact that it is actually created by human effort is supported to some extent by the legend about Shibei Santara and the famous saying "Do you care for the twelve hundred sculptors or only for your son?" The objective of this tiny book is to arouse the dormant memory of the Odias and bring back their self-confidence regarding the excellence of their own sculptural skill. No matter what, any book describing the great Konarka will always appear tiny and incomplete. This work of mine is no exception.



ALASHAKANYA (FEMALE BEAUTY)
Looking at the mirror she is wearing vermillion on her forehead honouring her married status

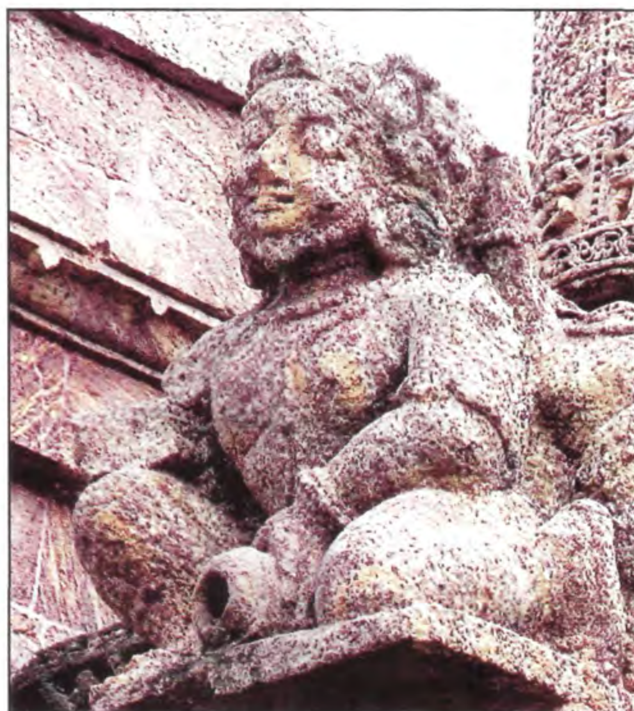
Some learned people and thinkers have written books on Konarka in English. However, it is impossible to achieve the purpose of this book without using the Odia language. While writing this book, the books about Konarka written in English have been referred to at many places and after due analysis of the opinions expressed therein, they have either been supported or dissented from. Regarding research on Konarka, the author of this book is so much obliged to these previous writers that it cannot be expressed in words. This book describes the sculptural and architectural supremacy of Konarka along with its religious sanctity. Apart from the English books, I have received immense help from others also, like Professor Ray Sri Jogesh Chandra Raybahadur Vidyanidhi and the famous archaeologist Srijukta Rakhal Das Banerjee who, through their respective letters, have cleared my doubts. I am obliged to Respected Babu Sri Madhusudana Dash who took much trouble to read the draft of the book and write a long Preface. The then Inspector of Schools in Satyabadi, Sri Daitari Nanda and some of my dear students have greatly helped me in preparing and giving the final shape to the book. The King of Bamanda, Sri Dibyashankara Sudhala Deba, C.B.E has greatly obliged me by taking the responsibility of printing the book. What to talk of my colleagues in Satyabadi! From the very beginning to the end of the process like, while selecting the topics, thinking about them, analysing the subjects, and finally writing the book, they have been with me always. I am also very much thankful to my well-wisher Editor Sri Dinabandhu Gadanayaka and his assistants for their effort in carrying out the proof reading of the material coming out of the printing press before publication of the book.

Lastly, depending solely on the benevolence, assistance and cooperation of the readers, I have picked up the courage to publish the book. Now, the book is good, bad or useful will only be determined by them.

Satyabadi
Mesha, year 1326 (April 1919)

Sri Krupasindhu Mishra

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MALE AND FEMALE PRIVATE ORGANS INSTALLED AS WASTEWATER OUTLETS



KRISHNA PLAYING THE FLUTE



KALIYA DALANA

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CHAPTER I

MAITREYA BANA
(THE MAITREYA FOREST)

Konarka, located on the sea beach, at a distance of 22 Miles in the north-east direction of Puri, is one of the many holy places existing in Utkal (Orissa or the present-day Odisha). In spite of a few villages located nearby, the place now wears a lonely and deserted look. The entire length of the road from Puri leading to Konarka is covered with sand, and even a mild sun makes it so hot that it becomes difficult to walk on it. While walking on this road, at many places, the foot gets stuck in the sand. Again, not a single house or a shady tree is found on the road side for the traveller to take rest for sometime. Therefore, the road leading to Konarka mostly remains unused during the summer, the rains and the winter or rather almost always, throughout the year.

Today Konarka looks deserted and there are reasons for it. Now, neither the image of Sun God, the presiding deity of Konarka, is present there nor there is his temple standing with its original elegance and grandeur. Except the dilapidated main temple and the deteriorating *Mukhashala* (the porch), all the rest of the structures of Konarka temple complex have ceased to exist. All the wealth of Konarka has been washed away with the turbulent flow of time and so is the case with the sacred River Chandrabhaga, which survives today symbolically appearing only as a thin stream. All the factors practically responsible for attracting tourists, especially the religious tourists, to a place, such as, facilities for worship, taking a holy dip, observing religious rituals, celebrating festivals and visiting the beautiful temples are not available today at Konarka. Hence, unlike many other holy places of Odisha, neither many festivals are now observed at Konarka nor many tourists come here for enjoying the festivals. Here exists only a temple complex in ruins with some sculptural artefacts lying in its campus here and there. Again, no lodging facility for the Hindus is available here. About fifty years ago, a monastery was established near the south-side boundary of the temple. However, it is meant for the *Nirankaris* and not very suitable for the Hindus to reside. Though loved by a handful of knowledge-thirsty critics, since long, Konarka has lost its importance for the religious tourists.

Konarka is deprived of pilgrimage activity since long. Even then, like the other Indian holy places, it is still being treated in the *Kshetramahatmya* (epics on its sanctity) as a major place of worship.

As usual in the epics, Konarka is described with many different names, giving it a different name in different epics. In *Brahma Purana* it is named as Konaditya and as Suryakshetra in *Skandha Purana*. In *Prachi Mahatmya* it is known as Arkakshetra or Ravikshetra, in *Bhabishya Purana* as Mitra Bana, in *Shamba Purana* as Maitra Bana and in *Kapila Samhita* as Ravikshetra or Maitreya Bana. Out of all these names, Mitra Bana, Maitra Bana and Maitreya Bana are not heard any longer. However, it was quite famous by its old name Maitreya Bana,long before it was known by its present names like Ravikshetra, Arkakshetra or Suryakshetra. As per *Kapila Samhita*, it was named as Maitreya Bana after the place originated due to the penance observed by Maharshi Maitreya.[1] Hence, initially up to a certain period of time, Konarka was known as Maitreya Bana. Later, with reference to the Sun, it was known as Mitra Bana or Maitra Bana. To explain such names like MitraBana or Maitra Bana, Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra says that, Mitra means friend (as explained later) and since the place was helpful in curing the disease of leprosy in Shamba, it was named Mitra Bana or Maitra Bana. However, it seems more logical to attribute the name Mitra to the Sun. Explaining the logic behind it, as per the epics, the Sun travels though twelve astrological signs in its annual orbit and assumes different names[2] while residing at each of these individual signs. In other words, the Sun is known by twelve different names during the twelve different months of its journey. The first

1. (Written in Sanskrit language –Transliterated version) –"Maitreyatapasarjjitam" - Kapila Samhita - (Appendix – II, Sl. No. 01)
2. (Verses written in Sanskrit language – Transliterated version)–

Ekosou Bahudhavutwa Kalavedadaninditah
Mitro Margashiremasi Poushe Bishnu Sanatanah
Chaitramase Tapedvanubaishakhe Tapanahsmrutah
Gavastih Shrabane Mase Jamo Vadrapade Tatha
Itoute Dwadashaditya Masi Masi Prakirttitah

Mase Mase Tu Patati Ekodwadshatam Brajet
Baruno Maghmase Tu Surjyo Bai Falgunepicha
Jyeshthamase Tapedindra Ashadhe Tapate Rabi
Hiranyaretashwajujih Kartike Tu Dibakarah
Urarupa Mahateja Jugantalanabarchsah
Sri Padmapuranam – Shrustikhanda -Chap. S8-(Appendix – II, Sl. No. 02)

and –

Indrodhata Vagastwashta Mitrotha Barunorjyama
Ete Sahasra Kirana Aditya Dwadasha Smrutah

Bibaswan Sabita Pusha Anshuman Bishnurebacha
Marichat Kashyapat Yajne Putranaditiruttaman
Sri Padmapuranam-Shrustikhanda-6th Chapter-(Appendix -II, Sl .No. 03)

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of these twelve names is Mitra. Mitra is the point from where the Sun starts its journey and comes back to it at the end of the year. Hence, it is the home or the most favourite place of the Sun. Therefore, the place is believed to have been named as Maitreya Bana. An interesting mythological story about Shamba described in the epic, *Shamba Purana* describes the relationship of the Sun with Maitreya Bana.[1] -

Shamba, the son of Jambabati and Krishna, was the most handsome person in their entire *Yadav* community. He was also quite aware of this fact and was proud of it. Shamba had no respect for the aged, the learned or for other important persons in the society. Though Sri Krishna and his father Basudeba and all the other members of the *Yadav* community had immense respect for Maharishi Narada, Shamba, as a habit, was humiliating Narada. Narada tried hard to change Shamba's attitude through counselling only to fail. Like the bad attitude of Shamba, Narada was also quarrelsome in nature. Finally, he vowed to take revenge and teach Shamba a lesson. To create a sharp difference between Shamba and Krishna, Narada once told Krishna that Shamba had illegal relationship with his sixteen hundred Gopis or the women of Gopapura and he was taking advantage of the Gopis, as the women, being enchanted by his irresistible charisma forget their social status when they meet him. However, Krishna laughed it away and told Narada, "Shamba is so young and he has such a beautiful personality and nature that it is impossible for him to behave that way with his apparent mothers". To make his point, Narada decided to show Krishna the actual event some day and that day came when Krishna had been on a visit to the hills of Raibataka. Narada played a trick and asked Shamba to accompany him to the Raibataka hills as Krishna was waiting there for him. Shamba obliged Narada, went to the hills, and found the Gopis bathing (naked) in a pond. The Gopis, being mesmerised by the charisma of Shamba, started to adorn him. Narada utilised the moment and called Krishna to the spot to show Shamba amongst the Gopis. Now Krishna was convinced and had no doubt about Shamba's bad character. He cursed him to suffer from the dreaded disease of leprosy and lose all his charisma and beauty thereby. Shamba tried to prove his innocence but to no avail. The curse could not be retracted. As per Narada's advice, to be cured of the disease of leprosy, Shamba left for Maitreya Bana to practice meditation, observe penance and offer prayers to the Sun God for twelve long years. Shamba entered the beautiful Maitreya Bana located on the banks of the River Chandrabhaga (Page 16)and started to do rigorous penance fully immersed in devotion and prayer for the Sun God. Being pleased with his prayer, one day the Sun appeared before Shamba in his dream and advised him to recite the "Twenty-one Names of the Sun" with faith, belief, dedication and respect.

After twelve years of rigorous worship, meditation, prayer and recitation of the "Twenty-one Names"[2] of the Sun, the Sun God being pleased with Shamba appeared before him. On asking him what blessings he wanted from him, Shamba replied, "Let me have respect for you for ever." The Sun God was further pleased and said, "I am very happy with your prayer. You may ask for a second blessing." Then Shamba prayed to him, "With your blessings let my body be free of the disease." Then, immediately Shamba was cured of the disease and he retrieved his original handsome and charismatic personality. The Sun God instructed Shamba that, from that day onwards, whoever builds a temple in his name to establish a place for his worship would have eternal life. Shamba was determined to carry out the instructions of the Sun God. The next day, while taking a bath in the River Chandrabhaga, Shamba, in the clear water of the river, found a beautifully sculpted image of the Sun God placed on a lotus flower. Earlier Lord Bishwakarma had built this image of the Sun God using some portions scrapped off the body of the Sun. There is a story behind it. -

The Sun, it is said, was married to Sajna, the extremely beautiful daughter of Bishwakarma. However, being scared of the very intense, hot and huge image of the Sun, she ran away from him and hid herself in Shweta Dwipa. The Sun God approached to Lord Brahma for advice. Brahma sent him to Bishwakarma for remedy. Bishwakarma set the Sun on his wood turning machine and trimmed almost one-eighth of his body sparing both of his feet. His body appeared more handsome and also bearable and he got back his wife Sajna. Bishwakarma did not throw away the trimmed portions of the body of the Sun. He used it to build the Chakra(the Discus) for Vishnu, the Trishul (the Trident) for Shiva, the Gada (the Mace) for Kubera and the Barchha (the Spear) for

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1. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra - Antiquities of Orissa –Vol. 2 – PP. 145 – 146
2. (Verses written in Sanskrit language –Transliterated version)–
   Vaskaro Vagaban Surjyashchitravanurbivabasuh
   Jamastatoanshumali Ch Januna-Priti-Dayakah
   Dibakaro Jagannathah Saptashwashcha Pravakarah
   Lokachakshuh Swayamvushcha Chhaya-Rati-Pradayakah
   Timirarirdinadhabo Lokatraya-Prakashakah
   Vaktabandhurdayasindhuh Karmasakshi Paratparah
   Ekabinshati Namani Jah Pathhetu Dite Mayi
   Tasya Shantim Prayachhami Swayansatyam Badamyaham - *Kopilasomhito* – 6th Chapter - (Appendix – II, Sl. No. 04)

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Kartikeya. He also sculpted a beautiful image of the Sun God with the residual material. This was the image found by Shamba in the River Chandrabhaga.

Later, Shamba constructed a beautiful temple at the place and installed this image of the Sun God in it. In the service of the temple, as per the advice of the Sun God, he engaged some Brahmins from Shakadwipa who also practiced ancient medicine. Since that day, this image of the Sun God is being worshipped and the process is still continuing till date.

Kapila Samhita also describes the story of Shamba, though only briefly, perhaps because it was already elaborated in *Shamba Purana*. *Kapila Samhita*, probably for the shake of brevity, did not mention the name of Narada in connection with Shamba's curse. Bishan Swarup (Ex District Engineer of Cuttack) has written a book titled *Konarka - The Black Pagoda of Orissa* in English language. He has reproduced this story of Shamba in his book extracting it from *Bhabishya Purana*.[1] However, perhaps unwittingly, he mentions Saint Durbasha as the one who cursed Shamba. The main theme of the story about Shamba is that, the Sun has the power to cure dreaded diseases like leprosy. The story, it seems, did not originate solely from the superstition of simple-minded folks. Since ancient times, the Sun is being worshipped by the Aryans of India with high esteem and devotion as their principal God. In the Indian history of religion, the Sun is worshipped in its many forms. (This statement will be explained in detail later in Chapter II). At first, the Sun was considered as the one and the only God. Then, with the progress of culture and the development of knowledge, the Sun was repositioned as one of the many gods worshipped then. The Sun was given the same status as that of Vishnu. Likewise, the Aryans used to worship the Sun in different forms at different times. It cannot thus be inferred that the faith in the power of the Sun to cure diseases was based only on religious and superstitious belief. It is felt that, along with the faith of the people and the superstition lingering in their minds, there were probably other logical reasons. With the development of worship of the Sun and the advancement of knowledge, the Aryans gradually came to know about the qualities of the Sun. From that day onwards, the Sun was worshipped as a curer of the diseases and is being worshipped that way since then. Of course, it is not easy to say when and how the Aryans discovered this special quality of the Sun. Like the many other institutions of ancient India and the discoveries made by them, the present subject also remains obscure. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra, in his famous book, has tried with sincere efforts to determine when the Aryans first discovered this new quality of the Sun[2]. It is stated in *Kabya Prakash* written by Mammatha Bhatt that, the Sun has the power to cure diseases. According to modern western scholars *Kabya Prakash* belongs to the 9th Century AD. If it is true, then it can be so inferred that, the fact was known to the Aryans long before the 9th Century AD as Mammatha Bhatt belonged to a time long before his writings were published.

It is said –
(Verses written in Sanskrit language –Transliterated version)
Mammtavattah Surjyashatakam Krutwa Kushthharogadbimuktim Leve ....- (Appendix - II, Sl. No. 05)

It means that Mammatha Bhatt (Mayur Bhatta)was cured of leprosy by chanting *Suryashataka*, a chant associated with the Sun God. Goyichandra writes in his scripture *Sankshiptasara Vyakarana Tika* –

(Written in Sanskrit Language –Transliterated version) -
Aarogyam Vaskaradichhedjnanamichhettu Shankarat
Muktincha Keshabadichhedhhana Michhedhhutashanat.......................................- (Appendix – II, Sl. No. 06)

It means that one wishes cure from the Sun, knowledge from Shankar (Shiva), salvation from Vishnu and wealth from Agni (fire). Again, as per the epics, the Sun God married Sajna, the daughter of Bishwakarma. She gave birth to twins named Ashwinikumar who served the gods as expert physicians. The Ashwinikumar twins had inherited this wisdom from their father, the Sun. Likewise many epics and ancient scriptures have depicted the Sun as the curer of many diseases. Whatever may be the historical facts behind this new information, from the above-mentioned scriptures it is evident that the Sun actually has the power to cure certain diseases. Even if these evidences stated in the epics are not treated as true and not to be taken seriously, the positive role played by the rays of the Sun in curing certain diseases cannot be dismissed. Even today, it is a well established and scientifically experimented fact that the rays of the Sun destroy the constituents of many diseases. Sometime ago it was learnt that a doctor in France cured certain diseases by the rays of the Sun and published the results of his

1. Bhabishya Purana also describes about the procedure for worshipping the Sun God, the particular day the event is to be observed, the materials required for the purpose and regarding offering free meals to the Brahmins on the occasion.
2. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra - Antiquities of Orissa – Vol. II, P. 147

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experiment. Everybody knows that a place not getting enough sunlight incubates many diseases in the body of its dweller. Again, people generally feel sick if the sky remains cloudy and the sun does not shine continuously for two to three days. At this instance, regarding the cure of diseases (particularly with reference to leprosy), the belief in the power of the rays of the Sun is not baseless and Shamba being cured of the disease of leprosy after exposing his body to the intense rays of the sun continuously for twelve long years does not seem to be so out of place. *Shamba Upakhyana* states that Shamba employed some Brahmins from Shakadwipa to carry out the worship of the newly installed Sun God in Maitreya Bana. Shamba had initially proposed to offer this responsibility to the priests of Ugrasena, the King of Mathura. As they declined to accept the responsibility, Shamba engaged the Brahmins of Shakadwipa. However, as per the epic on Shamba, for worship of the deity, the Sun God himself had advised Shamba to employ the services of the Brahmins of Shakadwipa, who also practised medicine.[1]
The Sun God said – (Verses written in Sanskrit language -Transliterated version)–

Na Jogya Paricharjyam Jambudwipe Mamanaghha
Mamapuja Parankrutwa Shakadwipadihanaya
Magashcha Mamagshcheiba Manasa Mandagastathha
Tanmagan Mamapujarthham Shakadwipadihanaya - *Shamba Purana*- (Appendix – II, Sl. No. 07)

Whatever be it may, the engagement of the persons of Shakadwipa (Page 14) in the service of Sun God was strange to the Indian society so wriggled with the caste system. The historians accord the persons living in Shakadwipa as Persians.

Bishan Swarup also states that the servitors of the Sun God were from Persia. They might be the Persian Aryans or some Aryans from India who possibly migrated to Persia. There are many mentions of Shakadwipa in various epics of India. Before the caste system got the Indian society strongly in its hold, the Aryans of both Persia and India, with their souls and minds united, were considering themselves as one people.

Aryans did not come to India altogether at one time or established and developed their society and culture here in one day. As the Aryans migrated to India phase by phase over a period of time, the Aryan culture and their society here also developed gradually stretched over a period of time. For over centuries together the Aryans migrated to this country and almost all the historians agree that they came through Persia. Some Aryans preferred to stay back in Persia while on their way to India. Hence, from the beginning of the period the Aryans migrated to India through Persia, up to a certain point in time, there was unrestricted movement of the Aryans between the two regions. The Persian Aryans were very much accepted by the Indians into their society and it continued until the caste system was strictly followed here. Many might have read and laughed at the report published not very long ago by Dr. D. Brainerd Spooner, which contained many new and strange historical facts. Dr. Spooner was engaged in excavation of Pataliputra or the modern city of Patna. As per his opinion in this report, Chandragupta and even Chanakya were Persians. However, one must accept at least the fact stated in the report of Dr. Spooner that, even many years after the Aryans settled in this Country, the Persian Aryans coming to India were being socially accepted without any restrictions. Even today many Shakadwipa Brahmins are living in Bihar and at other nearby places.

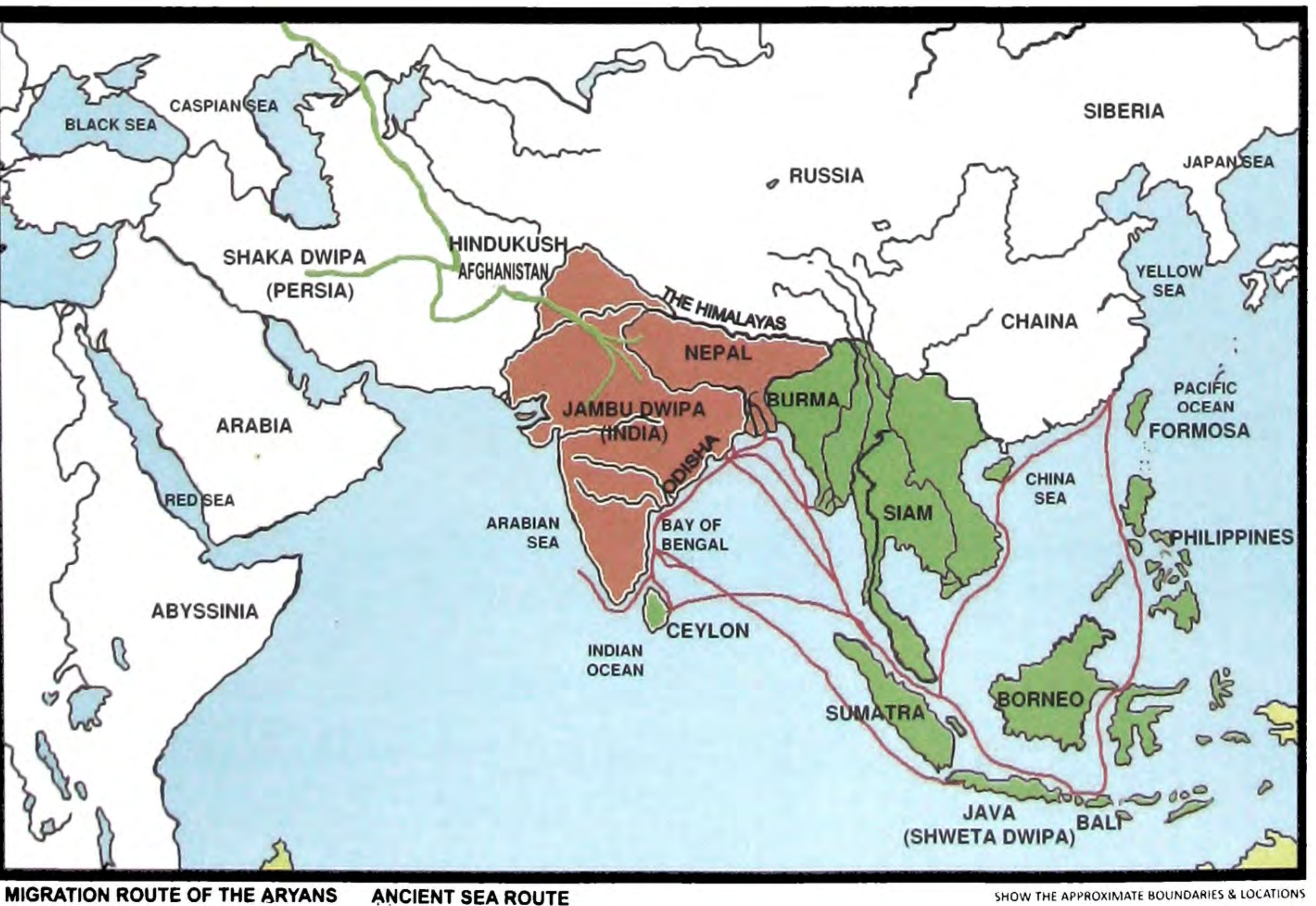
Apart from social ties between Persia and India, these two countries also had a strong political relationship. Persia was a border state of India during the reign of Chandragupta, and even before him, the Persian rulers were either allies or sub-rulers to the rulers belonging to Nanda dynasty. *Mudrarakshasa*, a play written in the ancient days states that, Chanakya, the Minister of Chandragupta had taken a vow to destroy the Persian rulers.[2] After the Mauryans, the Parthiyans of Persia, establishing an empire in India, made themselves known as Pallava. Persia was an ally to Emperor Pulakeshi of the Chalukya dynasty and had a strong political relationship with India. Another proof in favour of the strong ties between India and Persia is the *Shakabda* system of the *Shaka* rulers that is still in vogue in India. During the pre-Kanishka period, the *Shakas* were Shaivites or worshippers of Shiva. Hence, either social or political, India and Persia were strongly tied with deep relationships. For this reason, Shamba brought in some persons from Shakadwipa and employed them as servitors of the Sun God at Maitreya Bana. Anyway, the fact that the Brahmins of Shakadwipa were accepted in Maitreya Banaby the

FOOT NOTE: The story of Shamba reminds one of another story about Actaeon described in the Greek epic andone starts comparing the similarities about the outcome of committing a sin in these two ancient civilisations. Actaeon, the son of Aristaeus and Autonoe, the daughter of Cadmus, was a famous hunter. One day, while hunting in the Hills of Sitheron with fifty of his hunting dogs, he met and misbehaved with the beautiful Atemis travelling with her companions. Being angry at the behaviour of Actaeon, Atemis transformed Actaeon to a deer. The hunter dogs, finding a deer within their group, torn it apart and ate it.

1. Bishan Swarup – Konark – P. 4
2. *Mudrarakshasa* – Chapter I - 20thStanza

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JAMBU DWIPA (INDIA) – SHAKADWIPA (PERSIA) – SINHALA (CEYLON)
JAVA – SUMATRA – BALI AND THE SEA AND THE LAND ROUTES



Fa-Hien (399 – 411 AD) mentions that he travelled from Tamralipta to Ceylon and then to Java and finally to China in a merchant ship of Kalinga. Because of the dominance of the ships from Kalinga in the eastern sea it was named as Kalinga Sagara and later renamed by the British as Bay of Bengal after they shifted their commercial centre to Bengal.

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Aryans of India helps us to some extent to determine the historical heritage of the place and its time period. The acceptance of the responsibility of serving the God in Maitreya Bana by the Aryans of Shakadwipa means that, at the time, there were no social or cultural restrictions between the Aryans of India and those of Persia. The Aryans of Persia, gladly and without any restrictions, were being accepted by the then Indian society. However, the Brahmins of Shakadwipa living in Bihar and the nearby places could not be so accommodated into the Indian society and even now they are living socially separated from the Brahmins of India. As Dr. Spooner says, "This is so; because these Brahmins migrated to Bihar during the time of the Buddha or a little before that when the caste system had already assumed a very strong position in the Indian society." However, the Brahmins from Shakadwipa living at Konarka were not living as a separate group from the Indian society. Hence, it can be said that these Brahmins from Shakadwipa came to Konarka at a time when the caste system in India was very weak or not at all present. In this case, we have to move far back in time, to the age belonging to many centuries before the era of Buddha, to determine the time the *Shamba Upakhyana* was born and the Sun God was installed in Maitreya Bana. Looking from a different angle, the assumption is also proved to be right. Shamba is almost a contemporary of Emperor Parikshita. It is estimated that Parikshita ruled 3843 years ago. It is also stated in *Vishnu Purana* (the epic on Lord Vishnu) that, by the time Parikshita occupied the throne, 1200 years of Kaliyuga had already passed. Till date, 5043 years have been spent out of the total period of *Kaliyuga*. Hence, from now (5043 - 1200 = 3843) 3843 years back or in the 19th Century BC Emperor Parikshita ruled. However, according to the *Bhagabata* (a famous Hindu epic), Parikshita started to rule at the onset of Kaliyuga. This statement cannot be true as it is written in *Mahabharata* (a famous Hindu epic) that Kaliyuga started much before the commencement of the battle of *Mahabharata* and Sahadeba (one of the Pandavas of *Mahabharata*) had kept Kali tied down and confined at a place. It is also stated in the *Bhagabata* that, there was a time difference of 1115*[1] years between the birth of Parikshita and the start of rule by Nanda. As per Ramesh Chandra Dutta, Chandragupta Maurya in the year 320-21 BC defeated the Nandas and ruled the territory. Earlier the Nandas had ruled for 100 years. Hence, according to *Bhagabata* the time of Parikshita is (1115+320+100 = 1535) the year 1535 or 16th Century BC. From the *Bhagabata* Bishan Swarup[2], studying the position of the constellation at the time Parikshita ruled, has calculated the period to be 19th Century BC and not 16th century BC. Hence, it is inferred that Parikshita ruled during a period in the 18th or the 19th Century BC and not in 16th Century BC. Therefore, Shamba, though not the exact contemporary of Parikshita is only one generation down and can be assumed to be belonging to the 19th Century BC. Considering all the facts cited above so far, it is assumed that the Sun God was installed at Konarka or Maitreya Bana by Shamba in the 19th Century BC. This statement will be analysed and discussed stage by stage in later chapters.

Bishan Swarup, in his book *Konark* has expressed doubts about the location of the River Chandrabhaga where Shamba was taking his bath daily.[3] He has tried to identify it with the River Chenab or Chandrabhaga in Punjab and not at Konarka. He explains that Chenab in Punjab is closer to Dwaraka, the dwelling place of Srikrishna and Shamba. Further he explains that, it is impossible to have Maitreya Bana located at Konarka as, Konarka being a place on the beach and full of sand all over, it is impossible to have a dense forest grown there. Hence, he thinks, the Maitreya Bana was located in Punjab.

This doubt created in Bishan Swarup's mind is a serious matter. Assuming Maitreya Bana to have not been located at Konarka is like cutting off all the roots of mythological importance attached to Konarka. In spite of very strong proofs existing in the epics like *Kapila Samhita* and *Shamba Purana* supporting the location of Maitreya Bana to have been at Konarka, those who still drag it to Punjab or any other place should take the responsibility to prove their point. Nobody has yet put forth any satisfactory evidence to that effect and hence, it is not necessary now to prove him or her wrong through this book. Still then, to further strengthen the opinion stated here and for the sake of argument, it would not be out of place to examine the so-called evidences or facts put forth by Bishan Swarup in favour of his opinion.

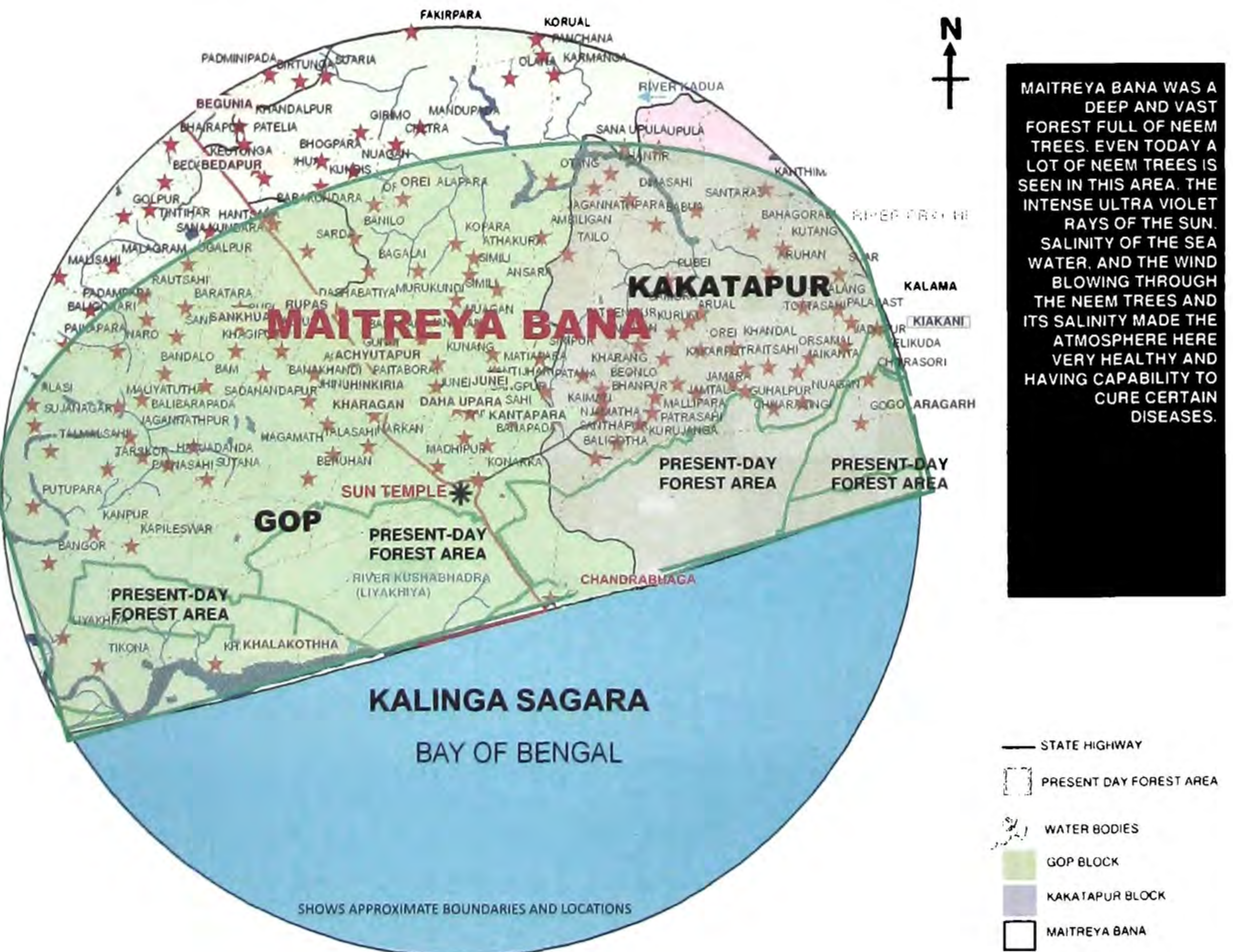
The first point raised by Bishan Swarup is that, Dwaraka is nearer to Punjab than it is to Konarka. This is not a valid reason at all. In the ancient days, the factor of distance, far or near, was never an issue for choosing the right

1. Verses written in Sanskrit language – (Transliterated version)–
   Aaravya Vabatojanma Pabanandavishechanam
   Etadbarsha Sahsrantu Shatam Panchadashottaram -*Bhagabata-Dwadasha Skanda*-3rd Ch.-26th *Shloka*-(Appendix-II, Sl.No. 08)
2. BishanSwarup – Konark – P. 3 Footnote
3. BishanSwarup – Konark –P. 4

* **FOOT NOTE**: Bishan Swarup wrongly assumed it as 1500 years and committed the mistake that, it is impossible to have Maitreya Bana located at Konarka as, Konarka being a place on the beach and full of sand all over, it is impossible to have a dense forest grown there. Hence, he thinks, the Maitreya Bana was located in Punjab.

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PROBABLE AREA OF MAITREYA BANA (MAITREYA FOREST)



Maitreya Bana extended from the banks of the river Prachi, Golara to the banks of the river Kadua in the north to the banks of the river Kushabhadra (Liyakhia) in the west and finally to the Bay of Bengal in the south. The sea was nearer to the temple than where it is today

place for observing meditation, prayer, penance or worship. Nobody was going to a place to observe a penance or propitiate because it was nearer to him. The saints used to choose a place only on merits and suitability of it for their purpose and success. Saint Kapil had established his Ashram in Patalapuri (presently Sagar Dwipa) and Bhagirath travelled from the heaven to the hell to find a proper place to meditate and offer prayers to rescue his ancestors from sufferings they were going through due to the evil spell cast on them. Ravana travelled to Kailash Parvat or Kailash Hills (on the Himalayas) from Lanka (present-day Ceylon) to pray and meditate. Hence, it would not have been impossible for Shamba to travel to Konarka from his native place for the success of his purpose.

Of course, presently no forest exists at Konarka. Even then, it cannot be said that there never existed a forest in the past. It would rather be appropriate to say that there was once a dense forest at Konarka, though now no such evidences are found there except some banyan trees, casuarina trees, cashew plants and some other varieties of trees and bushes. However, the place, where banyan trees and other plants and shrubs grow now, the possibility of a forest once existing there cannot be totally ruled out and the place termed as quite unfavourable for a forest to thrive cannot be accepted as a fact. As per the epic, *Brahmapurana* the place was adorned with different varieties of flowering trees along with many other species.[1]

(Verses written in Sanskrit -Transliterated version)–
Labanasyodadhhestire Pabitre Sumanohare
Sarbatra Balukakirne Dene Sarba Gunanwite
Champakashokabakuleih Karabireih Sapatakei
Punnageih Karnikareshcha Bakuleirnagakeshareih - *Brahmapurana* - (Appendix – II, Sl. No. 09)

Again as stated in the Odia epic *Prachimahatmya* –

(Verses written in Odia language –Transliterated version)–
(Rama)
Dekhile Achhi Dibyabana   Ananda Rajiba Lochana
Nana Kusume Latakula   Gulma Ballari Je Gahala
Malati Mala Nageshwara   Champaka Bakula Keshara
Dhaba Khadira Kurubaka   Patali Bakula Ashoka
Matta Matanga Juthha Mruga   Baraha Stabaka Kuranga
Shuka Kokila Shari Hansa Raba Karanti Aharnisha - *Prachimahatmya*-8th Chapter-(Appendix – II, Sl. No. 10)

Even if the mythological references are discarded, presently we find at Konarka many different varieties of trees and plants, small and big in size. Because of increasing human traffic to the place, these trees and plants are gradually vanishing. Today, there exists an extensive forest on the banks of the River Liyakhia, at four or five miles to the south of Konarka (Page. 17). Hiding in the shrubs of *Bangore*, even the tigers, bears and other wild animals live there. The tall bamboo figs in these shrubs are visible from quite a distance from the road leading to Konarka. There exists another forest at Golaragada (Page. 17) located on the beach at a distance of five miles in the north-east direction from Konarka. I came to know from the local people there that, even during the day nobody dares to enter this forest. Long ago there existed a fort inside this jungle and the King's soldiers, after receiving training, used to remain hiding in this fort until they were called in on emergencies. These forests are grown on the sandy sea beach area. Hence, to express that the seabeach area is quite unsuitable for growing a forest shows ones lack of experience in the subject. The epics like *Brahmapurana* and others, which mention about Maitreya Bana, also describe it to have been located on the seabeach. Maitreya Bana could not have been located on the seabeach had it been in Punjab. Again, in Punjab, there never existed a *Suryakshetra*. Hence, there is no reason to doubt that Maitreya Bana was located at Konarka. Even if one raises any doubt about it, no critic has yet proved it otherwise.

Under the present circumstances, it is justified and supported by the evidences mentioned in the epics that the ancient Maitreya Bana was not located in Punjab and it was rather the place which gradually went through many transformations over the time to finally appear before us as the present-day Konarka.

1. Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P. 438

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CHAPTER II

SUN WORSHIP
AND
THE SANCTITY OF KONARKA

Utkal is considered as the most important holy place for the Hindus in India. The ancient saints have assigned it a very high place in the empire of Indian religion due to the presence of various important shrines and holy places here. In the epics of the Hindus, the importance of Utkal has always been chanted with much pride. Age after age, the life of the holy Aryans has always been inspired by the sacred places and the benevolent nature of the religious people of Odisha moderated by the highly principled Hindu religion. Once, Shivaji, the Great Marahatta Warrior had said at Ekamra Kanan, "This State is a preferred abode of the Gods. Human beings infested with sins should not spoil the sanctity of this land."[1]

In the past, even in the western countries, Odisha was famous as a very important holy place for the Hindus.[2] For gradual development of this reputation of holiness over time the broad, benevolent and cordial nature of the people of Odisha has contributed a lot. Hence, in spite of being born at different places in India, many enlightened saints, yogis and religious heroes have always found Odisha suitable as their working ground to execute their plans. Many of them also came here to peacefully live their last life in the extremely cordial and religious environment of the kingdom. Hence, on this vast land of the Indian sub-continent, whenever a new religion appeared or a new prophesy enlightened the people, all these new religions and prophesies eventually found their way to appear in Utkal. In the sphere of religion, Odisha could be considered as a "Mini India". All the religions and sects like, Buddhism, Jainism, Shaiva, Soura, Shakta, Vaishnav and Ganapatya, once appearing in India, also appeared in Odisha in time and left in due course, leaving behind some mementoes for the present and the future. Utkal was physically tiny, but in the sphere of religion, the size of its empire was huge.

Considering the appearance and the disappearance of these religions from Odisha, it is inferred that the rulers and the ruled in Odisha were as quick to accept the new religions as they were opposed to renounce them completely. The nature of the Odias to accept the changes and at the same time sticking to their conservative tradition is very rarely seen elsewhere in the world. In the western countries, such qualities cannot be expected even in dreams.

Once upon a time, the Soura religion (worship of the Sun God), along with the other religions, was being practiced in Odisha. The practice existed in the Aryan community since the very ancient times. Before the advent of other gods and goddesses, the Sun was being worshipped as the only Almighty God. Of course, at the time it was quite proper to be so. However, human nature is not to remain satisfied eternally being confined only within a multifaceted and changing society. With the development of his knowledge base, within all these changes and variations, man tried to discover a constant source of energy. Since the ancient times, in the history of mankind, this particular human nature is germinated in the hearts of the people, in more or less quantities, in accordance with the level of their knowledge and the state of the culture they lived in at the time. At the dawn of a culture, it is quite possible for a human being to believe that, in the entire universe, the Sun is the cause of all creation and then destruction. A person finds the Sun in his front once he opens his eyes in the morning. He experiences the heat of its rays as he steps out of his shelter. Again, without the Sun shining, the trees, the plants, and even the life of the human beings become unbearable. The distance of the Sun from the man on the Earth and the amount of light and heat radiated from it are some of the facts beyond comprehension of normal human beings. In this situation, at the beginning of the historical age, it was quite normal for the human beings to consider the Sun as the only Master of this Universe. Since the beginning of the 6th Century AD, the philosophers of Greece, while investigating the theories of creation of the universe, inferred through reasoning and discussions, that the root causes of creation of the universe were water, air, heat, light, etc. Around 2nd Century BC, the Stoics recognised

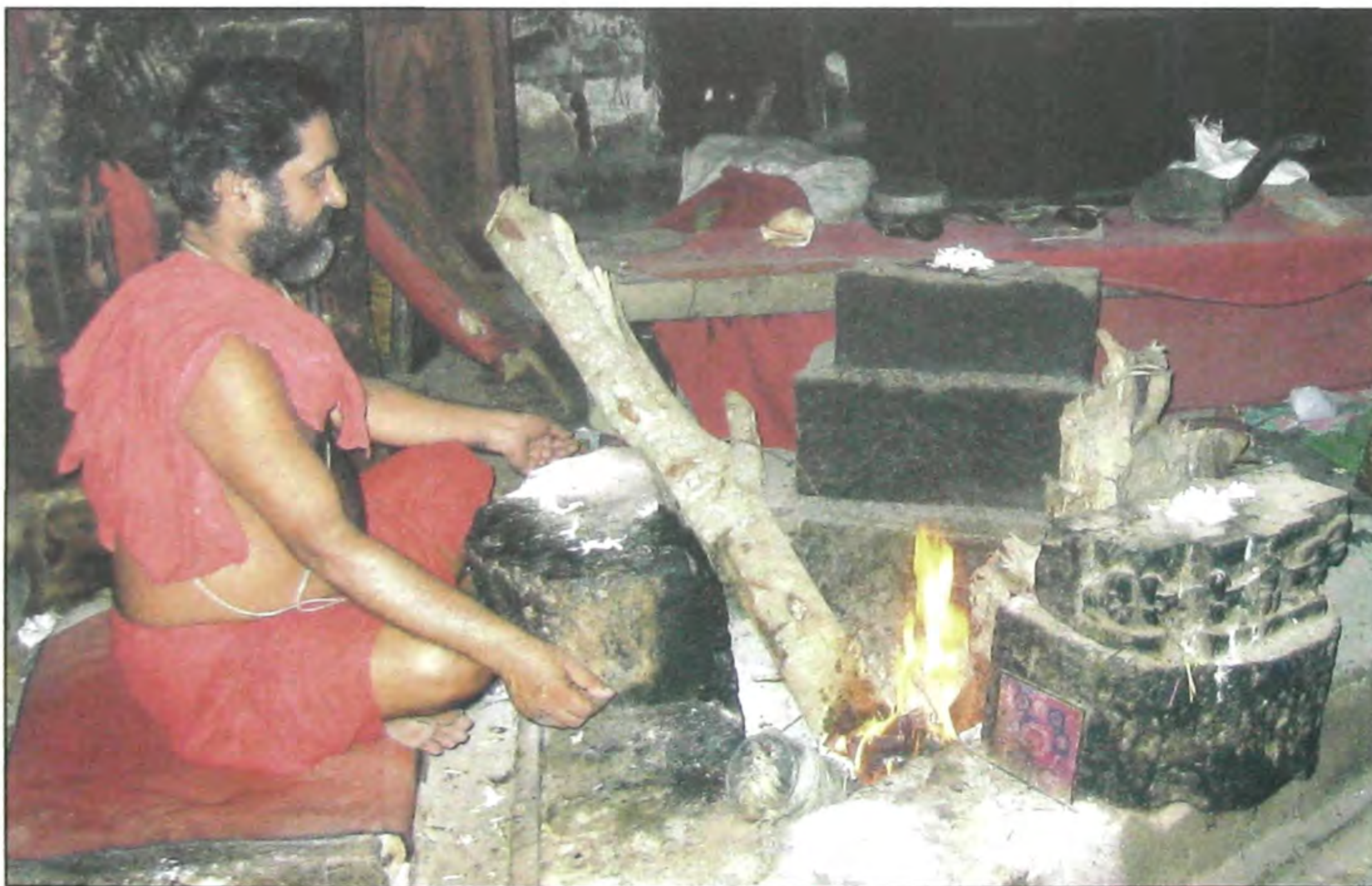
1. As per the "History of the Deccan" written by Ferishteh (Translated by Jonathan Scott), Shivaji came to Cuttack while heading towards his State after tactfully escaping from the prison of Aurangzev. In Cuttack a horse was arranged for him to return to his native place. On his way back, at Bhubaneswar (Ekamra Kanan) he made the above-mentioned statement.

2. Encyclopaedia Britannica (Article on Odisha) "The Whole of Orissa is Holy Ground"

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NIRANKARI MATHHA
Located at the south boundary of Konarka Temple



THE FIRE BURNING IN THE WORSHIP ROOM OF NIRANKARI MATHHA

It is said that the fire burning inside Nirankari Mathha has never been extinguished since the Mathha was established. Considering the presence of this ancient mathha so close to the temple, an ancient well, worship of Arkabata in the compound, the eternally burning fire, certain manuscripts and archaeological remains some scholars express that the Sun Temple at Konarka was built being inspired by some people of Tantric cult to achieve a certain purpose.

- (The Sun Temple, Konark – Dr. D. V. Sharma & Saptarshi Sanyal – Archaeological Survey of India)

However, as per Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra Sun worship did not start here after theNirankari Mathha was established. It has been going on here since the ancient days of Maitreya Bana and Shamba had built the firsttemple here for worship of the Sun God.

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the light as a divine element. In this situation, it is a matter of pride that the Aryans, in the 40th Century BC or even before that era, had determined the Sun as the All Mighty God, being the source of, or causing a source of light, heat, air and water. Therefore, the ancient Aryans regarded the Sun as Prajapati, the creator or the master of the universe comprising of all the living beings.

As the time advanced and the knowledge base of the human society expanded, the Sun lost its status as the one and the only god. It was re-recognised as one amongst many gods worshipped by the people then. At this time, the worship of Agni (Fire) and Vayu (Air) were also introduced considering them as equally powerful as the Sun. As per the Indian Aryans, these three sources of power, the Sun, the Fire and the Air, were all considered as Prime Gods. Later, many other new gods and goddesses were imagined and created by giving many different names or addressing the many different forms or qualities of these three Prime Gods. In other words, a separate god was imagined or created and worshipped for each of the different names, forms or qualities of these three Prime Gods. This way, as in Greece, the number of the gods and goddesses in India went on increasing and finally reached the number 33 crores (330 million). As per Rig Veda, instead of one Sun God, the Sun was also worshipped as different gods under the names like, Pusha and Mitra.For the Dwadashaditya or the twelve different names with which the Sun is known, separate divine chants or *Mantras* were written for each of the eleven of them except one. It is seen in mythology that, if a new quality is attributed to any god in any region, people forget the old qualities of the same god and adhere to the new one. Hence, if Pusha was considered as the presiding deity in one age, it might have been quite possible at a later period for Mitra becoming the presiding deity. Again, out of these special gods and goddesses, whose worship was accepted by the majority gained more importance and the others were neglected. This way, in the mythological and the Brahmin age, the *Vedic Trimurty* (The three Vedic Prime Gods), Agni, Surya and Vayu were transformed into Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara respectively. Agni was vested with the quality of *Shrusti* or creation and Surya with *Palana* or maintenance. Vayu was known as Indra and then later as *Rudra*. Being frightened by the *Rudra Rupa* or the ferocious appearance of Vayu, people attributed the power of destruction to him and worshipped him as Shiva[1]. The above-mentioned facts indicate that the present prime god Vishnu initially had no individual recognition; rather, he was the Sun God with a different name. Rig Veda states, "Vishnu moves very fast. He goes round the Saptalok or all the seven destinations in the universe and the entire universe remains under his three



IMAGE WORSHIPPED IN NIRANKARI MATHHA

1. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra – Antiquities of Orissa – Vol. I - P. 151

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THE ANCIENT WELL
INSIDE NIRANKARI MATHHA



THE ARKABATA* ON THE BOUNDARY OF
NIRANKARI MATHHA

feet." Since this description of Vishnu has been repeatedly written at many places, and the description matches to that of the Sun, the scholars consider Vishnu as the Sun, presented only through a different name. In the scripture *Satapatha Brahmana*, Vishnu has been clearly mentioned as Aditya or the Sun– "He, who is Vishnu, is alsoYajna (Fire) and Yajna is Aditya (Sun)"[1].

In Rig Veda, Vishnu is also described as the controller of time – "In a circular manner he is advancing the time with his 360 names (days)". These statements explain the daily and the yearly movements of the Sun. Again, the meaning of "*Vish*" is to be omnipresent. The Sun is omnipresent by spreading its light and heat all over. The other name of the sky is Vishnupada. Again Vishnu is one of the Dwadashaditya, that is, Vishnu is one of the twelve states or the names given to the Sun, one in each month, during the period of its yearly or twelve month journey. Hence, basing on these facts it can be inferred that, Vishnu is the Sun.

Later, in the mythological age, the gap between the Sun and Vishnu gradually increased. Finally, Vishnu was transformed into an independent god and was no longer considered as a name variant of the Sun. As a result, the Vedic Trimurty, Agni, Surya (the Sun) and Vayu came to be known as Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara respectively. In the age of mythology, the Hindu religion was divided in to five sects like, Shaiva, Vaishnav, Soura, Shakta and Ganapatya. The Souras or the followers of the Sun God remained as one sect within the Hindu religion along with the other four. In the Vedic age Vaishnavs were not considered as a separate sect. Later, being influenced by the new wave, the Vaishnavs became completely independent of the Souras. The epics of the later period do not mention as much about the Soura sect as about the Shaiva and the Vaishnav sects. With time, the Soura sect was almost wiped out from India, except a few of them still existing in the northeast provinces. The usual religious activities of the Souras are identical to those of the mainstream Hindus. The only difference between them is that, they wear *Rakta Chandan* (Red Sandal Wood paste) on their forehead, and a chain of *Spatika* (Crystal) beads around their neck. On every Sunday and on the day of *Sankranti* (beginning day of the month, when the Sun starts to move from one astral sign to the other of the twelve signs it passes through during its yearly journey) they eat food without salt and only once in the day. There are temples of the Sun God existing at

1. Satapatha Brahmana – 1st Chapter

*FOOT NOTE: The original Arkabata described in page 28 was located on the seashore with Bateshwara installed under it by the Keshari dynasty and the sea was much closer to the temple. As stated by Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra the same Arkabata does not exist now though Bateshwara is still being worshipped at the place. The Arkabata existing on the common boundary of Nirankari Mathha and the Sun Temple is regarded as sacred though it is a different one.

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Gwalior and other places, apart from those seen in the northeast provinces. The temple of Martanda in Kashmir is the biggest of all these temples. At these places the Sun God is worshipped as the curer of the diseases. Except at these few places mentioned above, the Sun is not worshipped anywhere else in India in temples specifically built for the purpose.

It is difficult to determine the time exactly when the practice of worshipping the Sun started. However, there is no doubt that it was adopted in this State soon after the Aryans settled down here. Though Soura was an independent sect, each Hindu was eventually a Soura, and worship of the Sun was a religious activity of each and every Hindu. Even today, the Sun is specially worshipped while carrying out the daily religious activities and also during taking a bath. In fact, though the Brahmins are Shaiva today, in fact, they appear to be more of a Soura than a Shaiva. Brahma is the creator, Vishnu is the mentor, and Maheshwar or Shankar (Shiva) is the destroyer. However, all these three activities are carried out by the Sun alone, every day and day after day. Hence, in all religious activities of the Hindus, the Sun is given the prime position amongst all the gods and the goddesses.[1]



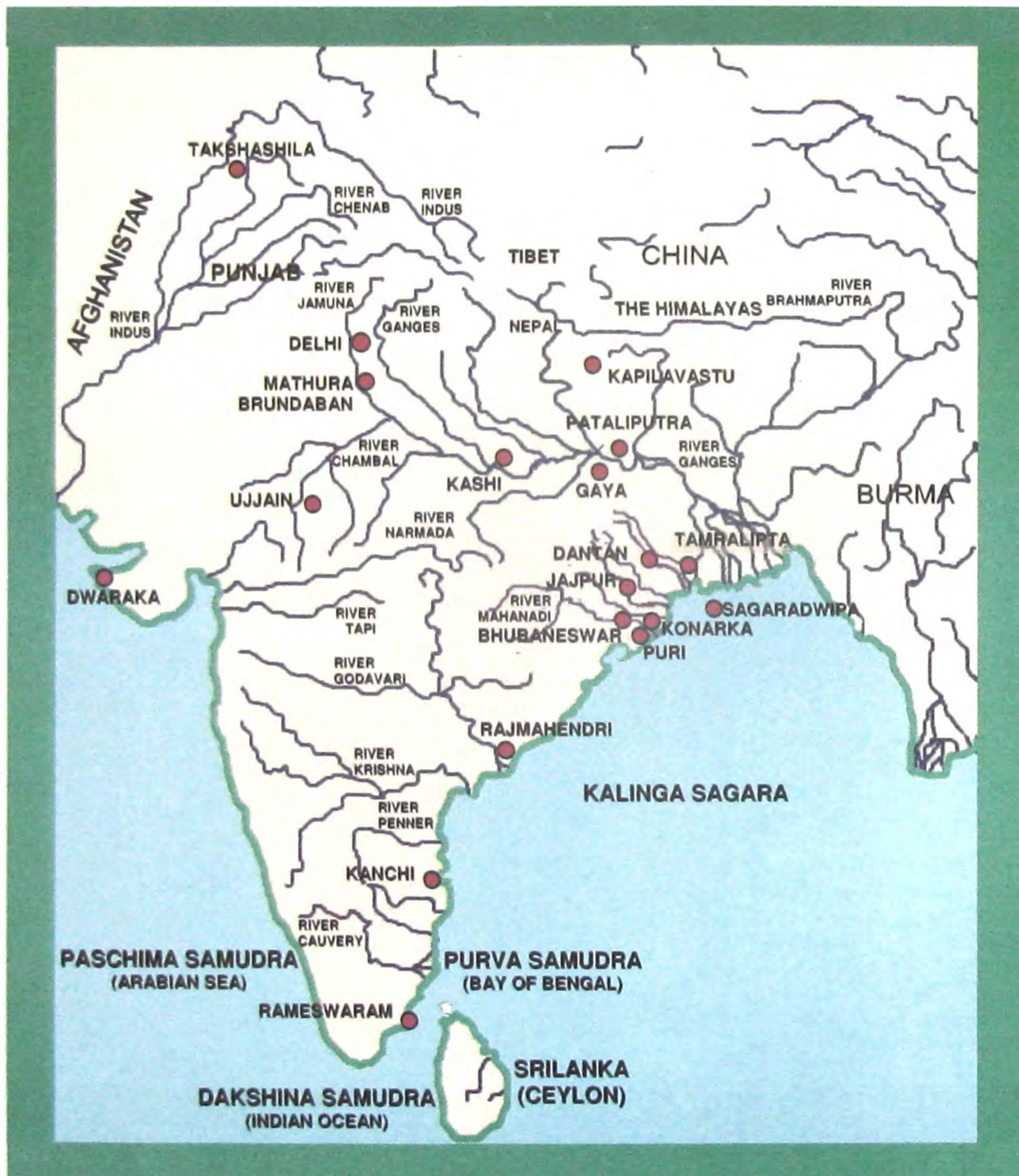
KALKI AVATARA (INSIDE)WORSHIPPED IN NIRANKARI MATHHA

All the Hindus, be Shaiva or Vaishnav, from the sunrise to the sunset, have all along been worshipping the Sun as the only god.The temples of the Sun God existing now or those existed at some point of time are not described as the holy centres for only the Souras. Likewise, the opinion of Sterling and a few other writers stating that, Langula Narasingha Deba, who built the Sun temple at Konarka and the later Ganga rulers were all Souras, cannot be accepted as true. The Ganga rulers, being staunch Vaishnavs, were also worshipping the Sun like all other present-day Hindus. Similarly, the Keshari rulers, being Shaivas also built the Sun temple at Konarka and worshipped the Sun (Chapters IX & X). Therefore, Dr. W. W. Hunter was definitely very wrong in stating that the builder of the Konarka temple, King Langula Narasingha Deba was a Soura, and so was his assumption which states, 'The practice of worship of the Sun was manifested only after the advent of Buddhism.' Hence, even if an independent Soura sect existed in India, each and every Hindu was in the habit of worshipping the Sun at par with the other practiced rituals. The practice of worshipping the Sun entered Odisha soon after the Aryans settled down here. Konarka was the centre for worship of the Sun. In fact, it is a matter of pride for Odisha that the god of the gods, the Sun, was installed here at Maitreya Bana in Konarka when such temples in the entire Country of the Hindus were so very rare.

1. (Verses written in Sanskrit language –Transliterated version) – *Mantra*
Namah Sabitre Jagadeba Chakshushe Jagat-Prasuti-Sthhiti-Nasha-Hetabe
Taimayaya Trigunamtadharine Biranchi-Narayana-Shankaratmane Namah.... (Appendix – II, Sl. No. 11)

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JAMBU DWIPA (THE ANCIENT INDIA)



THE MAP SHOWS APPROXIMATE LOCATIONS OF MOST OF THE ANCIENT CITIES AND THE RIVERS MENTIONED IN THE BOOK.

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THE SANCTITY OF KONARKA

Purusottam Mahatmya describes that, after defeating Gayasura (the demon),Vishnu installed the Shankha (the Conch) at Purusottam (the present-day Puri), the Chakra (the Discus) at Bhubaneswar, the Gada (the Mace) at Jajpur and the Padma (the Lotus) at Konarka as memorials of his victory over the demon. Apart from these places, Shambhu Kshetra or the Kapilas Giri (the Kapilas Hills) and the Binayak Kshetra or the Mahabinayak Hills of the kingdom of Darpan are also counted as the holy places in Odisha. The last two holy places are not visited by very many tourists from other states excepting some from the home State. Apart from *Kapila Samhita*,[1] these two places have been very rarely mentioned in other epics and scriptures. All the rest four places described above are the major centres visited by the Hindu pilgrims. However, after collapse of the main temple at Konarka, the place was deserted. Now, neither Konarka possesses the temple with its earlier splendour and gigantic appearance nor the holy water of Chandrabhaga is anymore flowing eternally and unobstructed into the vastness of the sea. The entire area has been transformed to a huge uninteresting and dry, desert-like place. However, Konarka was so important a place in the past that, even today, the almost vanished flow of the River Chandrabhaga is still continuing to attract many pilgrims to the place.

Konarka is described under various names in different epics. The epic *Brahma Purana* describes it in the name of Konaditya or Suryakshetra meaning the abode of the Sun. The epic says [2]–

"In Bharata Varsha (India) close to the south Sea is the famous country of Odra (Orissa). It is a place where pious men live. The Brahmans there are well versed in Vedas, Shastras, Itihasa and Purana, and keep themselves engaged in performing Yagyans and other religious deeds. The people of the other three castes also are pious and given to their respective religious duties. In that country the Sun is known as Konaditya, seeing whom man is freed from all his sins. The Kshetra sacred to this thousand-rayed god giving salvation and all that is desired, extends seven Yojanas (having a perimeter of 63miles) is covered with all sorts of fruit and flower trees. Religious men should bathe in the sea there on the Shukla Saptami (7th day of the bright half) of each month, and libations of water to Pitris &c., worship the sun (in the manner described) with full attention and devotion. Whoever offers Arghya to the Sun obtains salvation. Whoever recites the name of the illuminator of the three worlds gets eternal happiness. Worshipping the sun in this way, after bathing in the sea, a man afflicted with diseases gets rid of them, one wanting money acquires wealth, one desirous of having a son gets a son; in fact any thing desired could be got. By bathing in the water of Surya-ganga and drinking the water with a Kusa grass on the head, a man is freed from sins and attains heaven. By offering handful of flowers to the sun a man gets Suryaloka to live in. Worshipping Konarka with Veda Mantras and offering sandal, flowers, incense, lamps and eatables, &c., has the effect of ten Ashwamedha Yagyans, and the devotee being freed from all sins attains Suryaloka with body resplendent like the sun, and finally gets salvation. Whoever attends at the place of the Kamadeva (god of love and desire) during the festival in the bright half of the month of Chaitra, secures for himself all the benefits mentioned above. Whoever performs pilgrimage there at the time of the equinoxes, solstices and the like or on Sundays or Saptamis gets Suryaloka to live in. On the sea shore close to the place is the Shiva-linga known as Vamadeva, by worshipping whom one attains Shivaloka and afterwards gets salvation. One who dies in this Surya Kshetra goes to the Suryaloka and ultimately obtains Moksha or salvation."

It is said in an earlier chapter of this Book that *Shamba Upakhyana* is described in *Kapila Samhita*. Apart from *Shamba Upakhyana*, this epic also very loudly describes the significance of Konarka. The merits of Konarka are stated in the following pages as per the descriptions given in Chapter VI of the epic and re-stated by Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra in his book.[3]

"The forest called Maitreya Bana was produced by the penances of sage Maitreya. A person going thereto immediately cures himself of the frightful disease. Those who wish to dwell there without passion and free from sin, have their desires fulfilled by the lord of the day. Those who give up their life in the delightful forest of Maitreya, causing aside all sins, repair to the region of light. Those who devoutly behold the image of the

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1. It is one of the reasons for believing that ***Kapila Samhita*** originated in Odisha.
2. Bishan Swarup – Konark – P. 40 – 41
3. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra-"Antiquities of Orissa"-Vol. II. P.148-Foot Note

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sun on a Sunday in the sacred abode of Ravi, and those who die in the Maitreya forest, attaining immortality and freedom from all subsequent births, repair to the region of the Devas, and enjoy eternal felicity with the sun. Whoever worships Bhaskara there with ardent faith immediately frees himself from all sins, and obtains whatever he wishes. There exists the holy pool named Mangala which bestows desirable rewards to gods. A person bathing in it on a Tuesday for certain obtains prosperity. There also exists the sacred pool Salmalibandha, the purifier of the three reigns, the remover of all sins, the pure, the adored of *Siddhas* and *Gandharvas* (celestial musicians), surrounded by many saints, and the giver of salvation to all. Bathing therein men attain the light of the sun. Bathing in the Salmalibandha, and then beholding the lord of shadows, a person, destroying his sins, repairs to the region of the sun. There is not, verily there is not a river on earth equal to the Suryaganga. Bathing in the sea before the place, a person purifies himself from all sins. The lord of waters, the sea, is the noblest of all sacred waters, and in the waves of the lord of rivers there exists the sacred Ramesvara which Rama worshipped for the good of created beings; and those good men who worship that Ramesvara with due faith, obtain desirable rewards from Ramachandra himself. Whoever worships Mahesvara there with aromatics, flowers, and edibles, goes to the region of Siva in a celestial car. Those who bathe in due form in the waters of the Chandrabhaga, attain a body resplendent as that of the moon, and ultimately translate themselves to the mansion of Indra. There exists an all-granting tree named Arkavata, adorned by numerous birds, and at its foot dwell many saints, and whoever goes to this salvation-giving banyan tree, becomes for certain indestructible. For the good of the animated beings, Surya himself has become that tree, and those who recite the excellent mantra of Surya under its shade, in three fortnights attain perfection. On the earth this Arkavata is the same with the Nandana tree of heaven, I verily say onto thee thereby dwell Siddhas. Those who there reflect on Vishnu obtain the favour of Vishnu. Whoever dwells under that tree is doubtless a Siddha. Those who worship the maker of day on the day of Vijaya-saptami become successful everywhere and free from sin. (If the seventh day of the bright half in a month happens to be a Sunday then it is known as Vijaya Saptami.) Those who devoutly behold the Car Festival in the Maitreya forest, behold the real body of the sun."

As per the epics, *Brahma Purana* and *Kapila Samhita*, the following holy places, gods and goddesses did exist in and around Konarka.

01. Konaditya (Sun God)	02.Samudra (The Sea)	03. Surya Ganga	04. Kamadeva
05. Bamadeva	06. Maitreya Bana	07. Srimangala Tirtha	08. Srisajnalibhanda
09. Rameshwara	10. Maheshwara	11. Chandrabhaga	12. Arkabata

In *Padma Purana* in the section devoted to *Prachi Mahatmya* Konarka is named as Arkakshetra or Arkatirtha. *Prachi Mahatmya* is full of descriptions about the significance of Arkakshetra. It is said, once upon a time, the Sun God prayed and meditated at this place.

(Verses written in Odia language -Transliterated version)-

Tahanka (Chandaghanta) Nairurta Digare   Tapasya Kale Dinakare
Hele Se Tejankara Dhama   Brahmande Hele Anupama

– *Prachi Mahatmya* – 6th Chapter- (Appendix – II, Sl. No. 12)

Apart from the Sun and Brahma, Mahadeva (Shiva) also once prayed and mediated upon at this place. The story behind Lord Shiva's meditation at this place is described below. -

One day Mahadeva, after severing the head of Brahma, was passing through a deep forest inhabited by many saints and their women associates. The women got very much frightened with the sight of the severed head of Brahma in Mahadeva'shand. The saints, being disturbed and irritated, cursed Mahadeva to keep roaming the forest in the form of a *Matangi*. Parvati, the wife of Mahadeva, impersonating as a milkmaid, started to distribute curd, butter, milk and ghee free of cost to the saints to appease them to save her cursed husband from the sufferings. The women were also enchanted by the beauty and the cordial behaviour of Parvati in disguise. After some days, the day for worship of the *Saptarishi* approached. All the saints required milk and curd for the purpose. Parvati met with all their requirements in this regard without any hesitation. The saints being very much pleased, asked Parvati what she wanted as blessings in return. Parvati took advantage of this opportune moment, revealed her real identity and requested them to make her husband Mahadeva free from the curse. Mahadeva was soon devoid of the curse and travelled to the abode of the Sun *(Raviloka)*. As per the advice of the

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Sun, Mahadeva went into a deep meditation after taking a holy dip in Arkatirtha located on the west side of the temple of Shovaneshwara.

(Verses written in Odia language -Transliterated version)-

Pabana Vakshi Tapa Kari Susidhha Niyama Achari
Ape Apaku Aradhana Kari Nashile Papamana

- *Prachi Mahatmya* - 6th Chapter- (Appendix - II, Sl. No. 13)

From that day onwards this holy place became famous as Bimukti or the place for salvation. The importance of Arkatirtha can very well be realised from the stanzas written in *Prachi Mahatmya* and quoted below.

(Verses written in Odia language - Transliterated version)-

Arkatirthare Munimane Tapa Karanti Anukshane
IndrankuAdiJeteSura Se Sthhane Kale Tapaghora
Tahin Tapasya Sidhha Kari Swarge Hoile Adhikari
Arkatirthare Tapa Kari Shuka Hoile Jogadhari
Arkatirthare Snana kale Janma Huai Punya Bale
Purbe Sanakadaya Jete Tapasya Kale Arkatirthe

x x x x x x x x x x x x x x

Byasanku Adi Muni Jete Khyata Hoile Se Jagate
Purbe Je Jambubatisuta Se Tirthe Hele Upagata
Arkatirthare Snana Kari Jibi Je Bole Helakari
Jete Pakai Jai Pada TetikiJagafalaprada

x x x x x x x x x x x x x x

A Prachi Saraswati Nira Marjane Aushadhi Dehara
Bisheshe Arkatirthanira Mukti Diai Nirantara
Swarge Banchhanti Sarba Sura Ki Rupe Heba Martye Nara
Arkatirthare Kari Snana Gamantu Puni Nijasthhana

- *Prachi Mahatmya*-6th Chapter- (Appendix - II, Sl. No. 14)

As described in *Prachi Mahatmya*, the following gods and goddesses were installed in Arkatirtha -

01.Purneshwara -
Purneshwara was once worshipped by Brahma on the banks of the River Prachi. Later, following the event, he was known as Brahmesh.

02.Shovaneshwara -
As he was very competent in all fields he was named as Shovenshwara.

03.Mahakatyayini -
Installed on the west side of Shovaneshwara, the image has a very furious appearance. As she was very fond of meat and liquor, she was also known as Chandaghanta.

Likewise, Tribenishawara, Bileshwara, Rameshwara, Gokarneshwara and others also added importance to Arkakshetra by their presence. Though *Prachi Mahatmya* never describes the place under the name of Chandrabhaga, from the description of Arkatirtha and its geographical location stated in the epic, it is quite evident that the place is none other than Chandrabhaga.

It is believed that, on the seventh day from the New Moon Day *(Shukla Saptami)*, in the month of *Magha* (January-February), he, who takes a holy dip in Arkatirtha and then offers free meals and donations to the needy people, leads a disease free life.

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(Verses written in Odia language -Transliterated version)-

Je Aba Maharogi Huae Baidya Jahaku Chhadijae
Se Nara Kale Tahin Snana Nirogi Huai Bahana
- *Prachi Mahatmya*-6th Chapter- (Appendix – II, Sl. No. 15)

Prachi Mahatmya describes the same qualities to have been associated with Arkakshetra, i.e.,the quality of curing of the diseases, as those described in *Kapila Samhita* and *Brahma Purana* concerning Maitreya Bana. Hence, it would not be improper to say here that Chandrabhaga was once a part of the Prachi valley.

The importance of Konarka is also described in *Madala Panji* of Puri (The hand-written Chronicle of the temple of Lord Jagannatha in Puri). Bishan Swarup, referring to the *Madala Panji, Brahma Purana* and *Kapila Samhita,* has mentioned that the following gods and goddesses also existed at the place along with the Sun God of Konarka.[1]

01. Mayadevi (Prime goddess of Konarka)
Bishan Swarup, in his book *Konark* has described the ruins of the temple located at the south-west side of Konarka temple as that of the temple of Mayadevi. However, during my two visits to Konarka, I came to know from many different people of the locality that this temple once belonged to Goddess Ramachandi. As per an interesting and humorous legend, Ramachandi abandoned this temple and got herself installed in another temple located at the mouth of the River Liyakhia (present-day Kushabhadra). The story goes like this –

Kalapahada (the Hindu to Muslim converted raider who was taking revenge by destroying the Hindu temples and shrines), during his expedition to attack the temple of Konarka, entered the sacred temple premises and destroyed the temple of Ramachandi. Due to the entry of Kalapahada the place turned unholy. Ramachandi, to save herself from the attack of Kalapahada, escaped with a water pot, on the plea to fetch some water from the river for the raiders, only never to return. Kalapahada felt cheated and got very angry. He looked around and finally found her swimming with the water pot in the river mouth of Liyakhia. She did not respond to the call of Kalapahada and Kalapahada also could not enter the river as it was turbulent, full and swelling. He returned to the temple site disappointed and to vent his anger wrote a few words on the wall of the temple and then left.

Verses written in Odia language – Transliterated version) –
Bhala Ramachandi Bhala Re
Kalapahadaku Duare Basai
Bhala Pani Pain Gala Re - (Appendix – I, Sl. No. 16)

The stanza written in Odia language literally means –
"Hai Ramachandi Hai, you kept Kalapahada waiting at your door and left to fetch water only never to return."

Since then Ramachandi never returned to her old temple and was reinstalled in the temple at the mouth of the River Liyakhia. Hence, there is no doubt that the goddess once installed in this ruined temple was none other than Ramachandi. The subject will be discussed again in detail at the time of describing the temple of Ramachandi (Chapter VII).

02. Bamadeva
It was an image of Mahadeva installed on the sea beach. The name of Bamadeva was later changed to a different one. However, neither the shrine exists there now nor its name is heard any longer.

03. Asta Shambhu (Page 29)
To guard the territory, shrines of eight variations of Shiva or Mahadeva namely, Rameshwar, Chitreshwara, Mukteshwara, Ishaneshwara, Mangaleshwara, Tribenishwara, Utpaleshwara and Shovaneshwara were installed in all eight directions around the place.

(a) Rameshwara
Rameshwara, an image of Mahadeva, is now installed at the river mouth of Liyakhia.

(b) Chitreshwara
Chitreshwara is found at a distance of 3 miles on the banks of River Kadua near Jadupur of Golara.

1. Bishan Swarup – Konark – P. 43

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THE SACRED AREA AROUND KONARKA TEMPLE AS DESIGNATED BY THE POSITIONS OF THE ASTA SHAMBHU AND THE ASTA CHANDI, THE SIXTEEN DIVINE IMAGES PROTECTING THE AREA

ASSUMPTIONS

1. THE ASTHA SHAMBHUS AND THE ASTHA CHANDIS ARE INSTALLED AT THE PERIPHERI OF THE SACRED AREA APPROXIMATELY IN ALL THE EIGHT DIRECTIONS NAMELY, IN THE EAST, SOUTH-EAST, SOUTH, SOUTH-WEST, WEST, NORTH-WEST, NORTH AND THE NORTH-EAST DIRECTIONS OF THE TEMPLE TO PROVIDE SECURITY TO IT

2. THE IMAGES OF SHAMBHU OR THE SHIVA TEMPLES ARE ALWAYS LOCATED AT THE OUTSIDE BOUNDARY OF A VILLAGE AT THE ENTRY OR THE EXIT POINT.

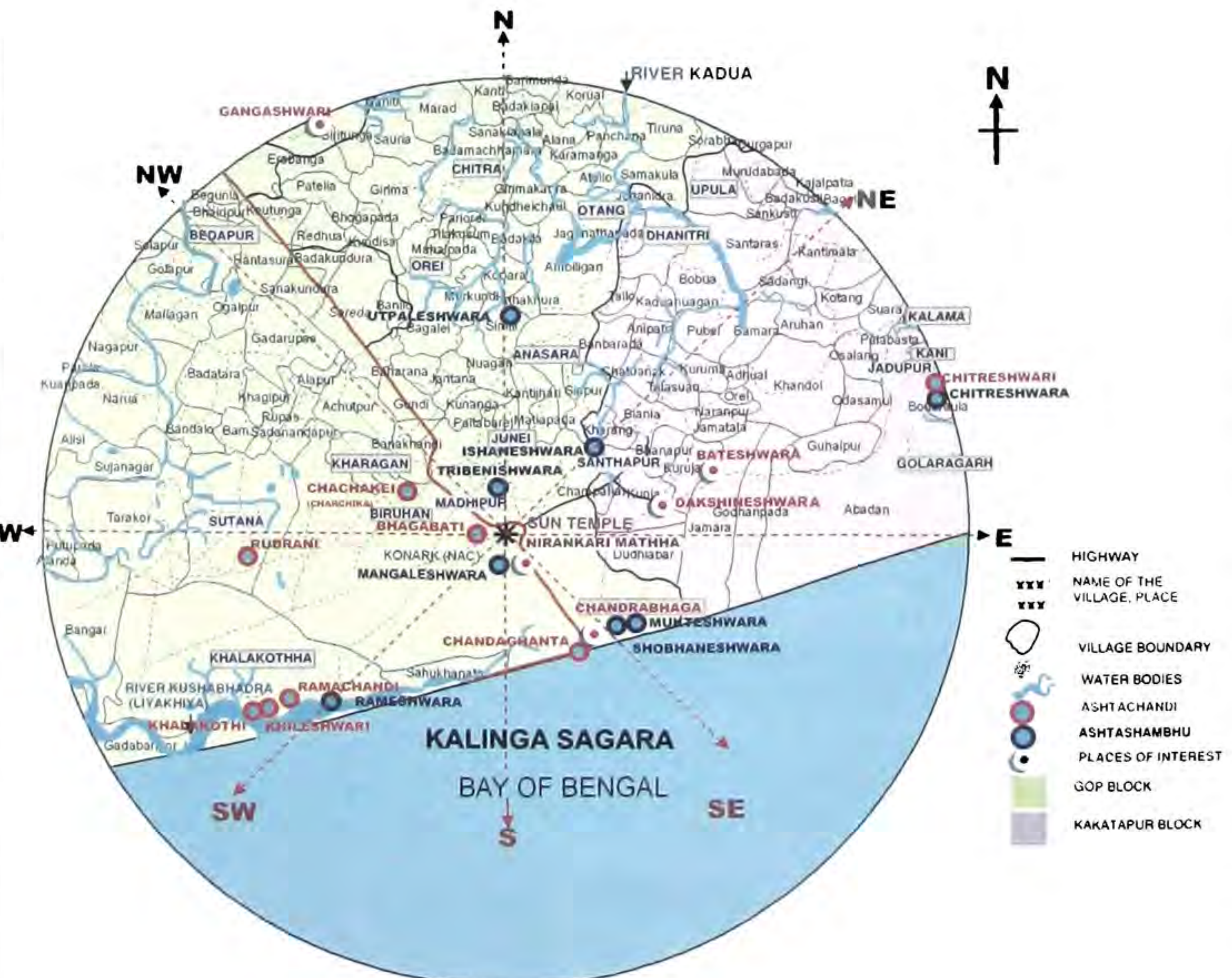
3. THE IMAGE OF THE PRESIDING GODDESS OR THE GRAMADEVATI IS INSTALLED A LITTLE INSIDE AT THE ENTRY POINT OF THE VILLAGE.

4. WHILE DETERMNING THE APPROXIMATE BOUNDARY WITH REFERENCE TO THE POSITIONS OF THE ASTHASHAMBHUS AND THE ASTHA CHANDIS, THE BOUNDARY OF THE RIVERS, OTHER WATER BODIES AND THAT OF THE VILLAGES ARE ROUGHLY TAKEN AS THE BOUNDARY LINE OF THE IN BETWEEN POINTS.

5. AS STATED IN THE BOOK THE VILLAGES CHITRA AND UTPALA PROBABLY WERE CONSTITUENT PARTS OF THE HOLY TOWN OF CHITROTPALA IN WHICH THE TEMPLE OF KONARK WAS LOCATED. HENCE THE BOUNDARY OF CHITROTPALA IS STRECHED BEYOND THAT POINT.

6. THE LOWER PART OF THE RIVER KADUA IS KNOWN AS CHITROTPALA AND ALSO AS CHANDRABHAGA. CHANDRABHAGA WAS ALSO KNOWN AS KADUAJHARA OR A STREAM OF RIVER KADUA.

7. AT THE TIME THE SEA WAS MUCH CLOSER TO THE TEMPLE OF KONARKA



THE SACRED AREA APROXIMATELY SPREADS OVER THE AREA COVERED BY A RADIUS OF 7 KILO METERS FROM THE SUN TEMPLE. IN ADDITION TO THE ASTASHAMBHU AND THE ASTACHANDI DIETIES THERE ARE ALSO OTHER SHIVA AND DEVI IMAGES, SOME OF THEM ADDED AT A LATER DATE, INSTALLED IN THE AREA. ACCORDING TO PANDIT KRUPASINDHU MISHRA A CAR FESTIVAL WAS BEING CELEBRATED EVERY YEAR AT KONARKA. HENCE, THERE MUST HAVE BEEN A TEMPLE IN THE NORTH OR NORTH-EAST DIRECTION OF THE SUN TEMPLE AT THE DESTINATION LIKE THE GUNDICHA TEMPLE EXISTING AT PURI. HOWEVER, NO TRACE OF THE TEMPLE OR THE ROAD LEADING TO THE PLACE IS SEEN NOW.

THE SUN TEMPLE WAS CONSTRUCTED AFTER FILLING UP THE CHITROTPALA GORGE WITH STONE BLOCKS OF HUGE SIZE. CONSIDERING THE SIZE OF THE MATERIALS USED, TO PROVIDE EASY TRANSORTATION OF THE HEAVY MATERIALS RIGHT UP TO THE WORK SITE IT WAS DONE SO. PROBABLY, THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE GORGE EXISTED THERE AND IT WAS FILLED UP COULD BE ANSWERED BY DRILLING ONE HOLE UPTO A DEPTH OF 150 TO 200 FEET CLOSE TO THE TEMPLE BASE BUT AT A SAFE DISTANCE AND ANOTHER AWAY FROM THE COMPOUND WALL AND COMPARING THE SIMILARITY AND DISSISIMILARITY IN THE SOIL SAMPLES COLLECTED FROM BOTH THE PLACES AT DIFFERENT SIMILAR DEPTHS.

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(c) Mukteshwara

Mukteshwara was installed on the sea beach. As the beach was badly eroded by the waves, Mukteshwara was one day washed away by the sea. One or two years later, the deity was seen floating on the surf of the sea for two to three days. However, since it was known to everybody that the deity had been washed away by the sea, nobody was visiting the place and the *Pandas* or the servitors of Mukteshwara could not be informed about it, and the deity could not be rescued. Finally Mukteshwara was lost in to the sea. There are still 7 or 8 *Manas* (1 Mana is approximately equivalent to 1 Acre of land) of agricultural land owned by Mukteshawara in the village of Anasara on the bank of the River Kadua, located at a distance of 3 miles north of Konarka. The servitors of Mukteshwara are still living there and enjoying the possession of the land.

(d) Ishaneshwara

Ishaneshwara or the God of the northeast direction is installed in the village of Santhapur located at two miles in the north-east direction of the temple of Konarka.

(e) Mangaleshwara

Mangaleshwara is located at the backside of the monastery located on the south side of Konarka temple.

(f) Tribenishwara

Tribenishwara is being worshipped till date in the village of Madhipur located at about a distance of one half mile from Konarka. The priests of Tribenishwara also worship the Nabagraha shrine present inside the compound of Konarka.

(g) Utpaleshwara

Utpaleshwara is installed and being worshipped in a small village named Utpal near the village of Anasara.

(h) Shovaneshwara

Shovaneshwara was located on the sea beach near the River Chandrabhaga. However, since many years till date there is no trace of the deity.

All these variants of Mahadeva (Shiva) have been well described in *Prachi Mahatmya*. Now, apart from them, Dakshineshwara, Amareshwara, Bateshwara and other Mahadevas are also seen here. On the day of Magha Shukla Saptami Festival (on the seventh day in the bright half of the month of Magha or January - February), Dakshineshwara and others come on a visit to Chandrabhaga along with Ishaneshwara and Tribenishwara.*

04. Asta Chandi – (Page 29)

Asta Chandi or the eight supreme goddesses are considered as the protectors of the holy place. Out of these eight goddesses, only seven names, like Khalakothi, Ramachandi, Bhagabati, Rudrani, Khileshwari, Charchika and Chitreshwari are found in the scriptures. The name of the eighth *Chandi* has not yet been known from any source.

(a) Khalakothi

Khalakothi is installed as the prime goddess of the village Khalakotha at the river mouth of Liyakhia near Ramachandi.

(b) Ramachandi

Ramachandi, though was initially installed inside the compound of the temple of Konarka, is now relocated at three miles south of it, at the mouth of the River Liyakhia.

(c) Bhagabati

Bhagabati was being worshipped in a village located at one half mile west of Konarka. Gradually the village disintegrated and the deity was lost under the sand dunes. One day, a priest was instructed in his dream to regard a particular tree bearing a vermillion mark on its trunk as Bhagabati and resume her worship soon which was obliged to by the priest. Accordingly, till date, that tree trunk bearing the vermillion mark is being worshipped as *Bhagabati* and many sacrificial offerings are being made there every year.

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1. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra-"Antiquities of Orissa"-Vol. II. P.109-Foot Note

***Foot Note**: As per Prachi Mahatmya, Gokarneshwara, Bileshwara, Shovaneshwara, Rameshwara, Angeshwara, Amareshwara, Grameshwara and Tribenishwara are together known as Astha Sambhu or the eight guardian Mahadeba images providing security to the sacred zone.

2. Abul Fazl - Ain-i-Akbari – Translated by Francis Gladwin- Vol. II. P. 15

***FOOT NOTE**: "Many pretend thatat this place is the tomb of Kabir Mowelhid,and to this day they relate many stories of his sayings and doings. He was revered by both Mohammedans and Hindus on account of his wisdom and exemplary virtue. When he died, the Brahmans wanted to carry his body to be burnt, and the Mohammedans insisted on burying it, but when they lifted up the sheet from the bier, the corpse could not be found."

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(d) Rudrani
Rudrani is being worshipped as the prime goddess of village Sutana located at two miles south-west of the Konarka temple.

(e) Khileshwari
Khileshwari is being worshipped along with Khalakothi in the village of Khalakotha.

(f) Charchika is installed and worshipped in the village of Biruha located at two to three miles north-west of Konarka and is currently known as Chachakei.

(g) Chitreshwari
Chitreshwari is installed in the village of Jadupur near Chitreshwara, one of the Asta Shambhu.

Even though the number of *Chandis* (female divine beings) is mentioned as eight, the names of only seven *Chandis* have been given. However, it is said in *Prachi Mahtmya* that, to the south of the temple of Shovaneshwara, Mahakatyayini is installed as Chandaghanta. Hence, it may be assumed that Chandaghanta was once being regarded as the eighth *Chandi*.

5. Aruna
Aruna is the charioteer of the Sun God. He was placed on the Aruna Stamba or the pillar once installed in front of the Konarka temple. Now this pillar along with Aruna has been shifted to Puri and is relocated in front of the Lions Gate (main entrance on the east-side) of the temple of Jagannatha (Page 32 and 33)

Apart from the sea, the other holy places existing in Konarka are –

(1) Suryaganga
Suryaganga exists in the form of a pool located close to Tribenishwara in the village of Madhipur. As stated earlier, its importance has been described in *Kapilasamhita* and *Brahmapurana*.

(2) Mangala
Mangala is the name of a holy stream, no trace of which is seen now. It is described in *Kapilasamhita* as Srimangalatirtha.

(3) Srishajmlibhanda
Srishajmlibhanda is a pond now located at a distance of one and a half mile from Konarka. It is also known as Shimilibhanda. Its significance has been described in *Kapilasamhita*.

(4) Chandrabhaga
Chandrabhaga was known in the ancient days as Chitrotpala. Now it has been reduced to a mere pond and is located at a distance of one and a half mile from Konarka. The Arkatirth of Prachi Mahatmya is known as the present-day Chandrabhaga.

(5) Arkabata
Arkabata is the name of a Kalpabata or the holy banyan tree once existing on the sea beach. Its significance has been extracted from Kapila Samhita and described earlier. In the past it was being offered special worship. Now the same banyan tree is not there. However, the Shiva Lingam Bateshwara installed under the tree is still being worshipped there. Bateshwara was installed by the rulers of the Keshari dynasty.[1] The Kesharis* had installed Astashambhu (eight Guardian or Shambhus images of Shiva Lingam) at various places in Orissa for protection of the area. Apart from all the above-mentioned places, *Prachi Mahatmya* describes the holy sites concerning each and every Shiva Lingam existing in the locality. The mythological statements might be untrue or imaginary, but the holy places described in *Madala Panji* cannot be considered untrue. In fact, as described earlier, many of these holy places are still found in the locality though in symbolic manner and some shrines are also seen in dilapidated stage. Some evidences are also available to prove that many annual festivals and celebrations were being observed

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FOOT NOTE: To the Kesaris are attributed the eight guardian Shambhus of Odisha. These are,
1st. Hateshwara in *Atili* near Khurda, where a grand *mela* (festival) is held every year in the month of Magha (January – February). (A hot water spring also exists here.)
2nd. Vatesvara on the River Chitrotpala, a branch of Mahanadi in Pargannah Sarasvati, district Cuttack
3rd. Ungaraja Mahesvara, Bhuvanesvara
4th. Balunkeshwara at Barala 8 miles north-west of Puri (four miles from Satyabadi or Sakshigopal)
5th. Bhuvanesvara in Pragannah Kotadesa (Kothhadesha) in Puri district, 8 miles east from Bhubaneswar
6th. Lokeshwara in Puri town
7th. Kapileshwara near Bhubaneswar
8th. - ? (The location or the name of the Eighth Shambhu is not yet known.)

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COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

ARUNA STAMBHA (ARUNA PILLAR)

Aruna Stambha is a Rudrakanda type pillar having sixteen sides. Though originally belonged to Konarka Temple it now stands in front of the temple of Jagannatha in Puri after its installation there by the Marahattas.

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at Konarka. All these will be described in detail later in Chapter X.

The place was sacred not only for the Hindus because of the presence of Hindu shrines and celebration of various festivals of Hindu religion, but also the Muslims considered the place dear to them and were being enlightened by it. Abul Fazl writes in *Ain-i-Akbari* that the tomb of Prophet Kabir existed here.[2*]
After the fall of Konarka temple, all the institutions and the activities related to the place gradually slowed down with the passage of time, and finally came to an end. Even then, for quite a very long time, Konarka, for crores and crores of religious people, remained as one of the main centres of worship and salvation.

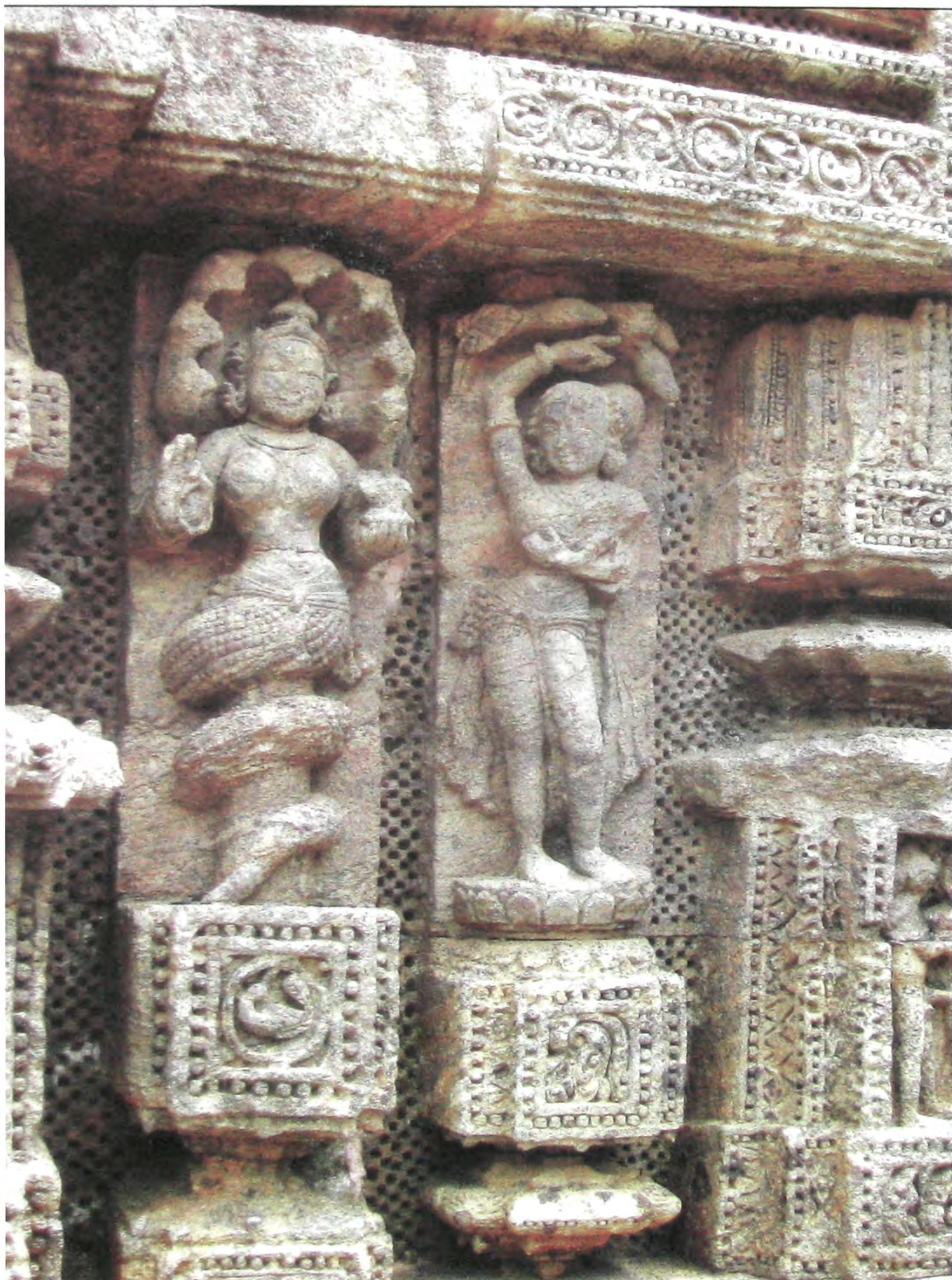


COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

CLOSE-UP OF ARUNA
SITTING AT THE TOP OF THE PILLAR (ARUNA STAMBHA)
LOOKING TOWARDS THE TEMPLE, FACING HIS MASTER

Pilgrimage is a must for people belonging to every religion existing in this world, though the importance assigned to it by its followers varies from religion to religion. An eternal and strong desire present in all human beings is to be ultimately united with the Almighty. To fulfil the desire, a Hindu or a Christian, an Ihudi or a Muslim, invariably considers visiting his respective holy places as his first step in this direction. Even after so many renaissances and revolutions that have taken place, the place the Christ was born, the place where he used to preach his prophesy, the place where he was crucified and the cross with which he was crucified are all considered as extremely sacred in the world of Christianity. In the middle age era of the Christian dominated Europe, history is the witness to the great revolution that once happened due to the matters related to pilgrimage. Even today, people get frightened remembering the crusades during which the deserts of Syria were drenched with blood of the martyrs and the persons who laid their lives to protect their holy land. The Hindus have not resorted to bloodshed but, religious tourism is an important component of Hinduism and is considered as a major step towards achieving salvation. The Hindu travels through hundreds and hundreds of miles, armed only with a strong will power and faith in God, to visit his preferred holy places, without any consideration for having money or the lack of it, and even if his body does not permit him to take the strain of the journey. Apart from having religious importance, these holy places also bear a deep social relevance. Since very long, India is divided into many different states and regions, tribes and castes, languages and cultures and systems and traditions. In spite of existence of all these different verities, because of their religious tours to very many places other than their native ones, the different people of different parts of the Country are able to meet each other and keep their souls and minds united through exchange of feelings. Hence, from time immemorial, in the Indian sub-continent, there exists a nationally united culture, without any deterioration, and that to without purposefully organising any congress, conference or societies as is required in modern times to fulfil such objectives.

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NAGA KANYA AND ALASHA KANYA OR SAKHI

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CHAPTER III

THE HYSTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF KONARKA

The crores and crores of people having faith in Hinduism consider the extraordinary fact described about a place in mythological epics as a truth, a living truth, and never unreal or imaginary, though it appears so at the present times. Being enchanted by this truth, the entire Hindu community travels from one end of India to the other on pilgrimage. The more is described in the epics about the significance of a holy place, the more people visit there. The significance of Konarka and the extent to which it is described in various epics have been briefly stated in the previous chapter. Had Konarka been a bland area like it is today, its significance would not have been described so extensively in the ancient epics and scriptures. Looking at the present state of Konarka, the visitors just wonder and ask themselves, "For what purpose such a huge and beautiful temple was constructed at this deserted location? Or, was the place really deserted then, as it is today?"

Of course, Konarka was never a deserted place like it is today, and the fact is confirmed by the descriptions given in various ancient scriptures regarding the importance of the place. Considering only the descriptions given in mythological epics and for the time being setting aside all the other available proofs, it can be assumed that, in the past, Konarka was actually a densely populated area. As indicated by these epics, a large number of pilgrims used to assemble at Konarka on different religious festivals. If nothing more, at least facilities for lodging and boarding for the pilgrims, and settlements for the priests in proportion to the size of the inflow of these visitors to the area, are usually found at such places. Hence, it would not be wrong to assume that, in the past, to handle the heavy inflow of pilgrims to the place, at least a town of moderate size with proper infrastructure must have existed at Konarka.

From the present installed locations of the Asta Shambhu and the Asta Chandi described in the previous chapter, it can be inferred that, the entire area, from the mouth of the River Liyakhia in the south to the bank of the River Kadua in the north, was designated as the holy zone of Konarka. All these gods and the goddesses were installed at all the eight directions of Konarka for providing protection to this holy zone (Page 29). Most of the innumerable gods and goddesses installed along the banks of the River Prachi and written about in *Prachi Mahatmya* were placed in and around Arkatirtha, i.e., Konarka. As described in *Brahma Purana*, Emperor Indradyumna, on his way to Purushottam Kshetra (Puri), once visited the River Chitrotpala. It was flowing towards the south and into the sea. A number of small and large towns, where lived many wealthy and learned people, were located on the banks of this river. It is also known from *Prachi Mahatmya* that, many holy places and habitats existed in the valley of the River Prachi. Hence, it can be assumed that, Konarka was one of these habitats or towns of the wealthy and the learned. Considering the area over which the Asta Chandi and the Asta Shambhu were spread out, it can further be assumed that the area of this holy city was quite huge in size.

It is apparent from the position and the direction of flow of the rivers on the eastern side of Puri that nearby Konarka there was once a large-size river flowing into the sea (Page 37). As per *Prachi Mahatmya*, the name of the River Prachi was Saraswati or Chitrotpala. This Prachi-Saraswati was flowing into the sea by the side of Arkatirtha. It is further stated in *Prachi Mahatmya* that the River Liyakhia (presently known as Kushabhadra on the mouth of which Ramachandi is installed now) is a part of the River Prachi. Prachi, emerging from the village of Khantapara and carrying all the water from the land area between the River Kushabhadra and the River Kandala, now flows between Konarka and the River Devi at about a distance of eight miles from Konarka. It also meets the River Kadua at its mouth and finally flows into the sea. During the rainy season, when severe flood comes in Kushabhadra (Liyakhia), it jumps the banks at Nimapara (a locality near Konarka) and overflows into Kadua. Hence, it is assumed that Kadua and Kushabhadra (Liyakhia) were once together and also Kushabhadra was once joined with the River Prachi. That is why, in *Prachi Mahatmya*, the lower part of Kushabhadra is described as the River Prachi. Again, it is said that Kadua had two branches, one flowing into the sea through the west side of the village Kalamakani (Kalama and Kiakani-Page 29) and the other into the River Prachi near the village Bandala. Apart from these rivers, Chandrabhaga, emerging from Kadua was also flowing into the sea through the village Anasara and by the side of the present temple of Konarka. Hence, taking all these factors into account, it may be inferred that, in the past, the River Prachi, along with all its tributaries and branches, had a

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very large and turbulent flow of water and was recognised as the main river in the district of Puri. O' Malley, in the Gazetteer of Puri, has also expressed his belief in such opinion.

Analysis of this opinion from another angle also confirms the fact that Prachi was once a large-size river. Water from the River Mahanadi flowing towards the district of Puri is carried through Kuakhai and finally to its destination through the three rivers namely, Daya, Bhargavi and Kushabhadra. The volume of water that flows now through Kuakhai is much less than what it was in the past, the reason being that, the spot near Cuttack, where Kuakhai branches out from Kathajodi, has been gradually silting over time. Now the spot has become so high with silt that unless the level of water in Kathajodi rises to a height of 15 to 17 feet, its water does not flow into Kuakhai. Therefore, when the depth of the beds of Kuakhai and that of Kathajodi were at the same level, a lot more volume of water was being carried away by Kuakhai which was more than the combined capacity of its branches namely, Daya and Bhargavi. Even today, with much less volume of water flowing through them, these rivers often jump their banks. Hence, it is assumed that, in the past the River Prachi and its branches were quite large and deep. Gradually, the volume of water flowing in Prachi reduced and the sand storms caused by the south wind filled up the beds of a few of its branches with sand to let them finally vanish. The map of the district of Puri shows the presence of a branch of the River Kadua at some distance from the temple of Konarka in the west direction. This branch is no longer seen as it is now completely buried under the sand. The effect of flying sand mass on the riverbed is quite evident from the sight at the mouth of River Liyakhia (Kushabhadra). The flow of water of Liyakhia, being obstructed by the sea waves, has created a wall of sand at the south side of its mouth. Again, by the force of the south wind this wall of sand is gradually so moving into the riverbed that, the river, instead of flowing in the east direction, is taking a path along the beach in the north-east direction. Hence, there can be no doubt about the existence of some major branches of the River Prachi in the past which are now lost under the sand.

Madala Panji states that King Narasingha Deba constructed a new temple at the gorge of Padmatola to replace the ruined temple existing then at Konarka. A legend connected with the construction of this new temple is still doing rounds among the local people. The legend will be discussed in detail later in Chapter XIII. However, just to mention the fact of the legend relevant now, it can be said that, Shibei Santara, appointed by the King as a Minister and the Person-in-Charge of construction of the temple, was laying the foundation of the temple by dropping stones into the gorge of Padmatola. The stones, soon after being dropped in to the river stream, were being washed away by the strong current of the river. Considering the huge size and massive weight of the stones used for construction of this temple, it can be very well imagined that the flow of water there was definitely very strong and forceful.*

A suitable rock or hill never existed or now exists near Konarka from where these huge stone blocks could have been supplied for construction of the temple. It could not also have been possible with the available technology at the time to transport such huge stone blocks from a distant place by any means on the land route. However, it could have been possible to execute the job by using the waterways. As mentioned by me earlier, the river, once existing on the west side of Konarka temple and lost now, was used to carry the stones to the temple site with the help of large-size rafts or boats. Even now the same river is seen as a very thin stream flowing at the backside of the village Kharagan located at two miles from the temple of Konarka (Page 38). I came to know from the local people that, in the summer, when the stream dries up, they dig up its bed to lift soil for use in their vegetable gardens and while digging they usually find many large size stone blocks, like those used in construction of the temple of Konarka, buried in the riverbed (Page 39). The villagers also confirm that the stone blocks used in Konarka temple were being transported through that river. Hence, the river must have not only been very wide and deep, but also maritime worthy even for movement of very large- size rafts and boats. During this period Odisha was famous as a kingdom of flourishing trade and commerce and it is well known from the history that the traders from here used to travel to many distant countries like Java and Bali Dwipa (the Island of Bali) to carry out trading and other commercial activities. Even today the people at Konarka and around it are very much engaged in trading activities. It may be assumed that, in the past, the rivers of this area were being used for maritime activities and from the river mouth the commodities were being transported to different countries through the sea route (Page 15). It is heard from the local people that, salt was one of the main trading commodities of the area, though it is not possible now to determine the quantity of salt that was once produced here. However, it can definitely be said that a large-scale activity of trading salt existed here when Konarka was

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***FOOT NOTE**: Some information regarding the huge size of the stone blocks used for construction of the temple at Konarka is given later in Chapter XIII of the book.

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THE RIVER SYSTEM, PATHARABUHA NALA AND THE CITY OF CHITROTPALA

KHALAKATHHA

KHALAKATHHA WAS THE ANCIENT PORT TOWN OF CHITROTPALA. IT WAS ALSO FAMOUS FOR SHIP BUILDING AND REPAIR ACTIVITIES (P. 29)

DAHA UPARA

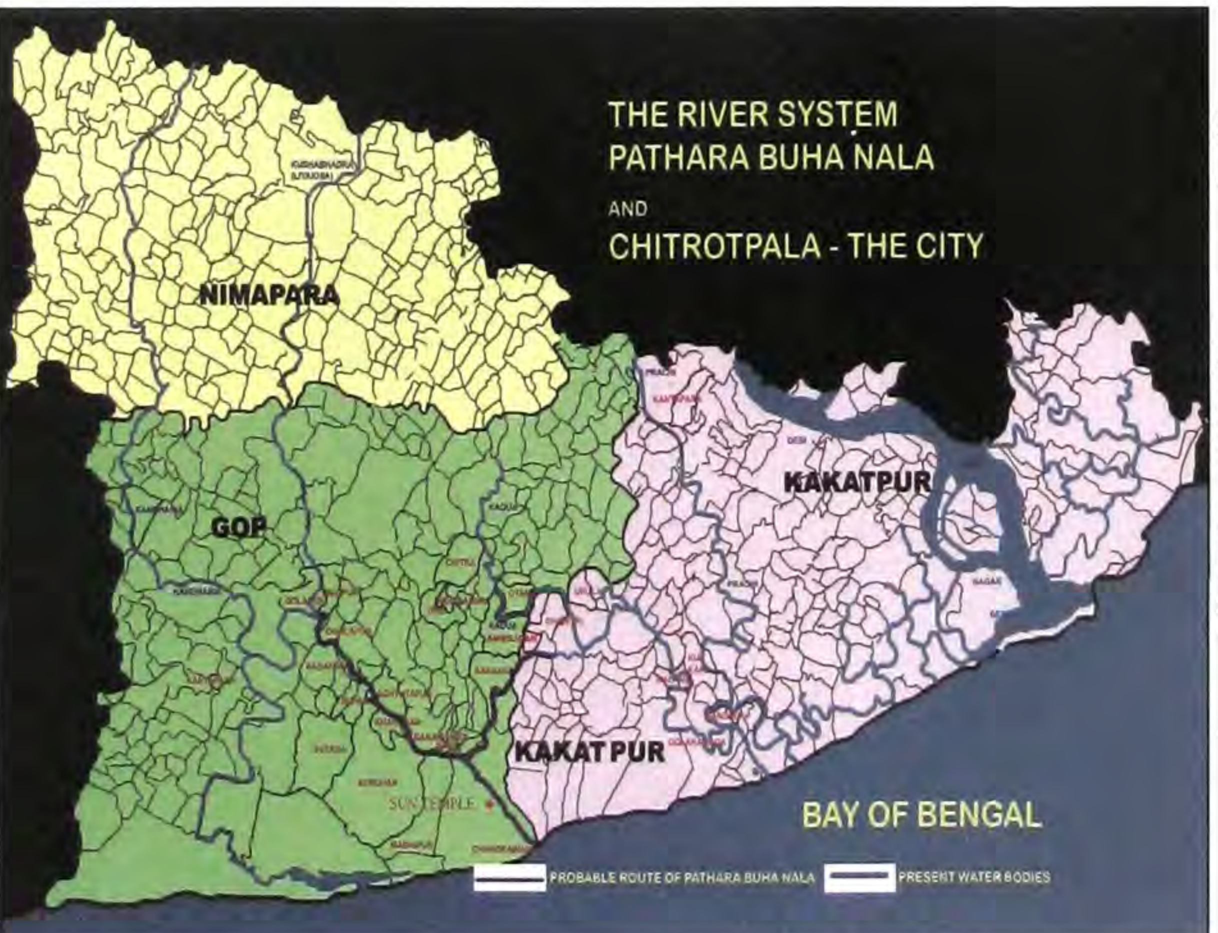
DAHA UPARA MEANS 'BUSINESS CENTRE'. THIS PLACE WAS MOSTLY USED FOR TRADING AND WAS LOCATED ON THE BANK OF THE CANAL THAT WAS BEING USED FOR TRANSPORTING STONE BLOCKS TO THE TEMPLE CONSTRUCTION SITE. (P. 29)

JUNEI

JUNEI WAS A MAJOR TRADING CENTRE FOR SALT AND OTHER MATERIALS AND DAHA UPARA WAS A PART OF JUNEI. (P. 29)

OREI

OREI ON THE BANK OF KADUA WAS THE PROBABLE SITE WHERE IRON BEAMS AND OTHER METAL ARTICLES FOR THE TEMPLE WERE BEING MANUFACTURED. (P. 29)



SHOWS APPROXIMATE BOUNDARIES AND LOCATIONS

The city of Chitrotpala or Chelitola was located on the banks of river Prachi and as per the Chinese visitor Hiuen Tsang its four sides were around 20 Li or 3 ½ miles long. As stated by Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra river Kadua was a branch of river Prachi. The lower part of Kadua was known as Chitrotpala or Chandrabhaga which was flowing towards south through the village Anasara and by the side of the Sun Temple of Konarka to finally meet the sea. Kushabhadra or Liyakhia was also once joined with Kadua making Chitrotpala (Chandrabhaga) a very large river discharging a large volume of water in to the sea through the Padmatola Ganda (Padmatola gorge) located close to the present Sun Temple. Tribenishwara was installed at the confluence of three rivers in the village of Madhipur.

Ptolemy of Italy in 2nd century AD also described Kannagar (Konarka) as a famous port existing in the eastern coast of India which indicates Konarka or Arkatirtha was also famous in the pre-Christian era.

According to Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra the entire area from the mouth of river Liyakhia in the south to the banks of the river Kadua in the north and bound by the positions of the Astasambhu and the Astachandi was known as Konarka Kshetra or the sacred zone of Konarka. Probably the area of the city of Chitrotpala or Chelitola extended from banks of Kadua at villages Kalama and Kani in the east to the banks of Kushabhadra in the west. In the north it extended up to the villages of Chitra and Upula and in the south all the way to the sea. (Additional Reference: Sketch in Page 29)

THE PATHARA BUHA NALA OR THE CANAL THAT WAS BEING USED TO TRANSPORT STONE BLOCKS AND OTHER HEAVY MATERIALS LIKE IRON BEAMS TO THE TEMPLE CONSTRUCTION SITE WAS A VERY LARGE CANAL STARTING FROM TINTIAR NEAR BEDPUR FLOWING THROUGH THE VILLAGES OF OGALAPUR, NILAKANTHAPUR, BADATARA, RUPAS, JHINKIRIA, ACHYUTAPUR, KHARAGAN, BANAKHANDI AND JUNEI TO FINALLY MEET THE SEA AT CHANDRABHAGA. NOW IT EXISTS IN PATCHES ALONG ITS OLD ROUTE. TRIBENISHWARA WAS INSTALLED AT THYE MEETING POINT OF THREE WATER BODIES.

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at the peak of its time, that is, during the rule of the Ganga dynasty. The activity gradually shrank and finally almost vanished by the time the British entered Odisha. In this regard it is stated by Sterling that, at the beginning of the British rule, the salt produced at the sea beach area of Odisha was the best in quality in comparison to that of the other places. The East India Company, having its unitary control over the activity, was receiving around Rupees Eighteen lakh per year as Salt Tax after deducting all the related expenses. It is also written by Dr. Hunter that, during his time (from 1870 to 1880) salt production was the major activity in Puri. As per the Gazetteer of Puri, even till the year 1896 - 97, production of salt was the major profession of the people here and that year, from the district of Puri only, 1, 95, 000 *Maunds* (an old measure of weight, 1 *Maund* = 40 *Seers* = 37.324 Kilo grams) of salt was produced. Junei, a place located at a distance of one and a half mile from Konarka on the bank of a river that does not exist now, was once very famous for its salt go-downs. Even today people remember it. In the year 1908, at the time of the great famine that struck Odisha, while visiting Marichipur and the adjoining area to distribute relief materials, it was known from the residents of the place that agriculture was not a viable activity in that area and the local people did not have adequate skill in agriculture. Their major profession was producing and trading salt. As the salt producing activity was completely stopped by that time, they were, time and again, being driven into the clutches of famine. The reason cited for it was that, salt was being imported from Liverpool (in England) and then brought in from Madras to be sold at a cheaper rate. This imported salt could be sold at a rate cheaper than that of the locally produced variety as salt was being loaded as ballast for the ships and thereby no freight was charged for it. Due to availability of imported salt at a cheaper rate, there was a gradual fall in production of salt in Puri and finally it came to a complete stop in 1899 - 1900 throwing many traders into financial disaster making it difficult for them to live through.



THE CANAL THAT WAS USED TO TRANSPORT STONE BLOCKS
AND IRON BEAMS – PATHARABUHA NALA

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STONE BLOCKS RECOVERED FROM THE BED OF PATHARABUHA NALA



STONE BLOCKS WITH CARVINGS ON IT ARE ALSO BEING RECOVERED FROM THIS CANAL

Pathara Buha Nala starting from Patharaganda at Tintiar, Begunia was flowing through Balikandala, Bedpur, Bhairipur, Hantasura, Ogalapur, Nilakanthapur, Badatara, Rupas, Jhinkria, Achyutapur, Kharagan, Mankadagoradi (Banakhandi), Junei, Anasara and Ambiligan to meet Kadua near Konarka. There was a trading centre at Junei for salt and other commodities. The place was known as "Daha Upara". Probably the present Junei market with its surrounding area was known as "Daha Upara" in the past. Probably one of the reasons for building the temple on the gorge of river Chitrotpala (Padmatola Gorge) after filling it up with stone blocks was to provide for easy transportation of the huge size stone blocks, iron beams and other construction materials right up to the construction site.

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Since, some traces of salt trading activity are still found here and the past activity is still lingering in the memories of the local people, the fact regarding its full-fledged existence in the past is accepted. Likewise, many other such trading and commercial activities were being carried out at the mouth of the River Prachi and its branches, the traces of which might have already been washed away from the memories of the people with the mighty and turbulent flow of time. The local people say that, there was an ancient port at the mouth of the River Prachi. They also confirm that a famous salt depot existing at Junei closed down only recently. Therefore, it is assumed that the River Chandrabhaga, as a branch of the River Prachi was also famous for the business of salt. It is assumed to be true that, as the flow of the River Chandrabhaga dried up, the trade and commerce associated with it also vanished. Hence, it may be inferred without doubt that, at the mouth of the River Chandrabhaga, near Konarka and around it, there once existed a major centre for trade and commerce.

The present temple of Konarka was not the only Sun Temple that was ever built there. It is written in *Shamba Upakhyana* that Shamba built a temple there for worship of the Sun God. This, being a mythological statement, if not taken seriously, the fact is further confirmed by the writings in *Madala Panji* which states that Purandara Keshari, the 30th of the 44 rulers belonging to the Keshari dynasty, built a temple at Konarka for worship of the Sun God and around the temple area instituted eight villages for the Brahmins engaged in the service of the Sun God. It further states that, since the ancient days, the rulers of the Keshari and the Ganga dynasties, belonging to earlier and the later periods of Purandara, worshipped the Sun at Konarka. In the beginning of Chapter II of this book, it is stated that Konarka was named Padmakshetra (The Sacred Zone of Lotus) as Vishnu had placed the Padma (lotus) there as an insignia of his victory after killing Gayasura (a demon) in a fight. Hence, it is presumed that, Konarka was a place as developed as the other places like Puri, Bhubaneswar and Jajpur where Vishnu also had placed the other three memorabilia after his victory in the same event. These three cities, namely, Puri, Bhubaneswar and Jajpur were occasionally being used by the rulers as their temporary capital cities. Hence it is believed that, even though nothing more, Konarka was also as important and as well populated a city as the other three and on occasions it was also used as a temporary capital by the rulers.

The famous Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang visited India during the period 634 AD to 649 AD and he came to Odisha during this period. In his famous tour diary *Si-Yuki* he mentioned about a city named Chelitola which was the capital of Odisha at the time of his visit. The historians express different opinions as regards to the location of the city of Chelitola. As per Hiuen Tsang, it was a very developed and wealthy city.
The description of the city given by Hiuen Tsang is stated below –

"On the southeast border of the kingdom of Uchha (or Odra or Odisha) located at the shore of the sea, there is situated a capital town called Chelitola. The four sides of it are around 20 Li (or 3½ miles). From this place the traders travel to different countries for trade and commerce. The foreigners also visit this place and some stop by for a while during their journey through the place. The wall around this town is high and strong. All types of rare and costly materials are available here. Outside this town there exist five Buddhist monasteries. These are very high in structure having many beautifully sculpted images of the monks on their bodies."

Bishan Swarup believes that Chelitola was located on the banks of the River Prachi, and he assumes that, sometime in the past it was much more developed than the town of Puri. General Alexander Cunningham does not agree with Bishan Swarup and identifies Chelitola as the present city of Bhubaneswar. However, Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra says that, Cunningham was wrong in assuming Bhubaneswar as Chelitola. Rather the present city of Jajpur was Chelitola of the past.

However, Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra was also as wrong as Cunningham was. First, there is no alphabetical or phonetic relationship between Chelitola and Jajpur or Jajpur had ever had a name which would have been written or pronounced as Chelitola. Again, as Hiuen Tsang describes, Chelitola was a large port, acting as a centre for the traders of different countries and it was located on the south-west seashore. Even if it is assumed that Jajpur was once a large port and acted as a centre for the traders, it was never ever located or is now located on the seashore.

Some others also identify Chelitola with Puri and citing certain facts attempt to project Puri as a Buddhist centre of the past. At the moment, it is not intended to prove whether Puri was or was not a centre for the Buddhists. However, it is certain that Chelitola and Puri were never the same city. Puri has always been known as either

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Srikshetra or Purushottam. Chelitola neither has any alphabetical similarity nor rhymes with the different names of Puri. The place identified by Hiuen Tsang as Chelitola must definitely be having a name which was pronounced by the Chinese-speaking traveller that way, and then, naturally was so expressed in words. Puri, Bhubaneswar or Jajpur do not phonetically rhyme with Chelitola and hence it is baseless to say that Hiuen Tsang would have identified any one of these cities as Chelitola.

Bishan Swarup assumes that Hiuen Tsang identified Chitrotpala as Chelitola. It might be possible that, Hiuen Tsang with his Chinese tongue would have pronounced Chitrotpala as Chelitola. *Prachi Mahatmya* also states about the existence of a town in the name of Chitrotpala. *Prachi Mahatmya* further states that, River Kadua, a branch of the River Prachi, was also known as Chitrotpala. It is written in Part One of *Prachi Mahatmya* that, Saraswati, the river of the heaven, after taking up different forms, was finally reborn in the River Mahanadi and then appeared as the River Prachi. After assuming the west direction it took up the names as Bhadra and Chitrotpala. Even today, a village named Bhadra exists at the location from where the River Kadua emerged from the River Prachi. Kadua, after flowing for some distance under the name of Bhadra, is renamed as Chitrotpala. Hence, there is no doubt that, the River Chitrotpala was also known as Chandrabhaga. As it is said earlier, Chandrabhaga emerged from Kadua and vanished at Konarka. Even today people also call Chandrabhaga as Kaduajhara (meaning the stream of Kadua). *Prachi Mahatmya*, in the following verses describes the emergence of Chitrotpala.

The verses are stated below –
Verses written in Odia language – (Transliterated version)–

Purba Kalare Prachitire — Chitra Chandala Purakare
Sarba Janare Nishthhapara — Hoi Sethhare Kare Ghara
Ta Sange Kashchit Dwijanari — Utpala Name Se Kumari
Bihara Kare Ta Sangare — Patni Vabare Nirantare
Purba Janmara Papabale — Santanahina Hela Kale
Erupe Keta Kala Gala — Marana Kala Asi Hela
Chitra-Utlapa Duhinkara — Jiba Chhadila Kalebara
Se Duhinkara Drabu Jata — Se Nadi Se Dinun Bikhyata

x x x x x x — x x x x x

Chitraka Utpala Namare — Linga Hoile Dui Tire
Kahili Dwijabaramane — Chitra-Utpala Hela Name

– *Prachi Mahatmya* – 2nd Chapter – 7-17 - (Appendix – II, Sl. No. 17)

Hence, there is no doubt that Chitrotpala was none other than Chandrabhaga, the lost branch of Kadua. At the place where Chandrabhaga had emerged from the River Kadua, exist two villages, one named as Chitra and the other as Utpala located on both sides on its banks. Out of the Ashta Shambhu (the eight Mahadevas or Shiva Lingams) at Konarka, two of them namely, Chitreshwara and Utpaleshwara are installed in these two villages. Hence, it may be said that, these two villages together were once known as Chitrotpala and Chitrotpala was then famous as a major town. Since Chandrabhaga being the main river was used for all major maritime activities, the city of Chitrotpala must have been also a major port at the time. Again, as two of the Asta Shambhu of Konarka were installed in the city of Chitrotpala, it can be very well assumed that, Konarka was also located inside the town of Chitrotpala. Hiuen Tsang has described to have seen some large Buddhist monasteries on the periphery of Chitrotpala. As per the opinion of Bishan Swarup, Konarka is one of these five Buddhist monasteries. He, from the very beginning of his book on Konarka to the end of it, assumes Konarka to be the remnant of a Buddhist monument. In Chapter XI the matter will be discussed in detail. However, for the time being, I would like not to consider the temple of Konarka as a Buddhist monument and rather focus my attention only on the other temples in Chitrotpala. Ruins of many more temples are found on the banks of the River Kadua and the River Prachi and it might just be possible that some of these ruins might have been of the Buddhist monasteries described by the famous Chinese visitor Hiuen Tsang.

A legend describes that, there was a town known as Dantapura in the kingdom of Kalinga (the present-day Odisha with a different boundary), where the tooth of Buddha was preserved after his death. Rhys Davids says that, it is

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stated in the Buddhist scripture *Nikaya* that, during the initial period of Buddhism, the city of Dantapura located on the seashore was the capital city of Kalinga. However, the archaeologists differ in their opinion regarding the location of the city. Some believe it to be Rajmahendri. Some others think it to be Puri. Again, some identify it with Dantan. According to Bishan Swarup, the city of Dantapura was located at Chitrotpala or near it. To dig the truth out of these different opinions, it is necessary to know the complete history of the tooth of Buddha. To write the history of Buddhism, Rhys Davids and many other writers have heavily referred to and depended upon *Dathavansa*, a historical chronicle preserved in Shinghal or Lanka (the present-day Ceylon) since the beginning of the Buddhist period. The following extract describes the writings about the tooth of Buddha in *Dathavansa*:-

After the death of Buddha, one of his disciples named Khema, collected a tooth of Buddha from the pyre and travelled to the capital city of Kalinga to present it to King Brahmadatta. Brahmadatta, in honour of the tooth, built "a temple inlaid with gold, adorned with pearl necklaces, abounding in hundreds of rooms at the top, difficult, like the early sun, to look at, owing to the radiance of various gems dazzling the eyes - a vehicle to heaven and to Nibbana (Nirvana), which produces excessive delight; he also made for the relic, in the same place, a seat resplendent with gems. Placing there the tooth-relic of the great sage he honoured it unworriedly, night and day, with all the requisites of worship.[1]"

The heirs to Brahmadatta also worshipped the tooth as per the traditional procedures. Then Guhashiva became the king (370 AD to 390 AD). He was very childish and freckle minded in nature though he respected the Niganthas or the Brahmins very much and was extending much favour to them. One day, a festival concerning the tooth was being celebrated. During this celebration, Guhashiva, being influenced by the divine power of the tooth converted himself to a Buddhist, became a staunch worshipper of the tooth and drove away all the Brahmins from his kingdom. During this period, Pandu, the king of Jambudwipa (the island of Jambu or the ancient India- Page 40) was ruling at Pataliputra. The Brahmins driven out of Kalinga by Guhashiva went to Pandu, and praised him for worshipping Shiva, Brahma and other Hindu gods and goddesses and at the same time criticised Guhashiva for not believing in these gods and goddesses and rather worshipping the bone of a dead person. Pandu became very angry on hearing about the disrespect shown by King Guhashiva to the religion of his empire. Guhashiva was only one of the many kings ruling under him in his great empire. Being disgusted with his such strange behaviour; he sent one of his brave kings named Chittajana to Kalinga to bring Guhashiva along with the tooth to Pataliputra. Chittajana on reaching Kalinga was mesmerised by the beauty of the temple and the divine power of the tooth and converted himself to a Buddhist. However, since Guhashiva was weak in power, Chittajana acquired the tooth relic from there and brought it to Pataliputra. There also, the tooth relic caused a number of miracles to happen which disturbed the mental state of Pandu. The Brahmins, on realising Pandu's condition, and to save him from a possible disaster, explained to him, "O King! There were in the world various incarnations of Janaradana (All Mighty God), such as Rama and the like; this bone is a part of him. If not, where such influence as this?"[2] After the death of Pandu, Guhashiva again brought the tooth back to his capital and placed it in the temple he had initially built for it. However, he could not keep it there peacefully for long. To acquire this tooth relic, Khiradhara, the king of an adjacent kingdom, attacked Guhashiva, though Khiradhara was defeated and killed in the war. Then the sons of Khiradhara's brothers, all together, attacked Guhashiva. Before the war, Guhashiva had married off his daughter Hemamala (Hemachala - according to the Siamese translation of *Dathavansa*) to Dantakumar, the prince of Ujjaini. Fearing that in the event of his death in the war, the sacred tooth might fall in the hands of the enemies, Guhashiva told Dantakumar, "If I die in this war, you will hide and carry the tooth to deliver it to the King of Singhala (Ceylon)." Guhashiva's fear came true. He succumbed to his injuries in the war. As advised earlier by Guhashiva, Dantakumar and Hemamala planned to flee under cover with the tooth. First they kept the tooth hiding under the sand and then after going through many difficulties fled with the tooth. -

"Having travelled by a path rendered difficult by hills and forests, and always followed eagerly by the gods of the woods, who had their hands filled with flowers and scented powder, they slowly arrived at the city of Tamalitti (Tamralipti). They suddenly saw a ship, made of planks fastened together, having a large (and) well-placed mast, a broad rising sail, and a skilful pilot, having merchant on board, going to Lanka wished for by them. Then the eminent Brahmans, going quickly near it, told the captain of their desire to go to Sinhala (Ceylon). He, pleased in mind by their speech, which was agreeable to the ear, as also by their good demeanour, made them ascend to the ship.[3]"

1. Dathavansa – P. 38 - Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra – Antiquities of Orissa -Vol. – II – P. 105
2. Ibid – P. 48
3. Ibid – P. 66

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The truth of the episode about the tooth of Buddha is doubtful. Some historians do not accept it as a fact as the episode has not yet been supported by historical evidence. Whatever may the case be, it is very difficult now to determine the location of Dantapura. Cunningham identifies Rajmahendri, located on the bank of the River Godavari as Dantapura. However, Manomohan Ganguli differs and says that, though Rajmahendri or Rajpura was the capital of Kalinga for some time, it could never have been the city of Dantapura as it would have been impossible for Dantakumar to travel such a long distance from Rajmahendri to Tamralipta under such adverse circumstances. Dr. J. Fergusson recognises the city of Purusottam or Puri as Dantapura. However, the author of Puri Gazetteer expressed his serious doubt over such opinion. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra considers Fergusson's opinion as wrong and determines the city of Dantan as the ancient city of *Dantapura*. Dantan station of the present Bengal-Nagpur Railways is at a distance of only 10 to 12 miles from Tamralipta (at 12 miles south of Jaleswar of Odisha). Dr. Mitra further says that the name Dantapura gradually deteriorated to be known as Dantan.

The main point raised by Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra in his argument is that, had Dantapura been the city of Puri or a place near it, then Dantakumar would not have travelled to so far off a place like Tamralipta for travelling to Ceylon. He could have travelled from Puri or any other ports nearby. However, this argument does not seem to be right, as it does not seem impossible for a person, who fled and was so frightened that he even had to travel under cover, to go to so far off a place like Tamralipta to avoid attracting attention of the enemy. To escape attention of the enemies, it might have been difficult to travel to Tamralipta from Rajmahendri but it was not impossible to travel from Puri or any other nearby place to Tamralipta. However, from the descriptions in different scriptures, it is known that Dantakumar reached Tamralipta after passing through many hills and forests and going through a lot of pain and sufferings. Here, it can be said that, it was not possible for Dantakumar to cross so many forests, hills, and go through so much pain and sufferings while travelling only 10 miles to reach Tamralipta from Dantan. Hiuen Tsang mentioned in his famous tour diary *(Si-Yuki)* that, when he wanted to travel to Ceylon specifically from Tamralipta, an Indian monk advised him, "In going to the Kingdom of the Lions (Sinhala), it is not necessary to undergo a long sea voyage during which the winds are contrary, the currents impetuous, and the *Yo-tcha* (Yaksha or demons) expose one to a thousand dangers. It would be better for him to start from a southeast point of Southern India; by that way he may arrive by water in the space of three days. Even though you may be obliged to ascend mountains and traverse valleys, you will accomplish your trip in safety. At the same time you will have an opportunity of visiting the sacred monuments of *Ou-tcha* (Oudra or Odisha) and other kingdoms."[1]

From the above description it is learned that the route from Tamralipta to Ceylon was comparatively dangerous. Hence, it was not usual for the enemy to think that somebody would choose Tamralipta to escape through the sea route. Not only in Kalinga, but at other places also, the enemy might have been looking frantically here and there for Dantakumar. In this situation, it is not impossible for the persons under cover to flee to the port of Tamralipta to save themselves from the eyes of the enemy. Again, from the descriptions it seems that the enemies were from the south. Hence, it was more dangerous for Dantakumar to flee to a port in the south. Even if the enemy did not belong to the south, it was also a fact that the enemy would not have as much doubted Tamralipta to be used as a gate by Dantakumar to escape to Ceylon, than that of any other ports in the south, which are usually used for travelling to Ceylon.

Dantakumar would not have been able to escape to Ceylon from Dantapura or any other nearby port, as the enemy was very vigilant and active at these places. Again, the sea route from Tamralipta to Ceylon was located far away from any port or the sea routes of the kingdom of the enemy. Hence, the sea route from Tamralipta to Ceylon was safer for Dantakumar as it was comparatively easier for him to avoid the attention of the enemy and its scouting ships for the fact that the ports and the sea routes of the kingdom of the enemy were separated from that of Tamralipta to Ceylon by a great distance.

Nobody has yet written that Dantapura and its beautiful temple ever existed at Dantan. Again, had Dantan been the same place as Dantapura, the Chinese visitor Fa Heian also would have written about it. He visited Tamralipta near Dantan, and travelled to Ceylon from there within 10 to 15 years after the tooth relic was transported to Ceylon. He never visited Odisha. Hence, it is assumed that Dantapura was situated at a far off place on the south-west direction of Tamralipta and Fa Heian did not think it proper at the time to travel so far to visit Dantapura. Since the main aim of his travel was to visit the Buddhist centres and the ruins of Buddhist monuments, had Dantapura not been far away, he would have definitely visited this famous Buddhist centre.

1. St. Joulien – Hiuen Thsang – P. 183 / Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra – Antiquities of Orissa – Vol II – P. 7

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It is known from the scriptures describing about the tooth relic and also from *Nikaya* that Dantapura was once the capital city of Kalinga. At this time, the border of Kalinga might have been expanded in the north direction up to the River Mahanadi or River Baitarani. Hence, Dantan rather might have been the north border city of Kalinga and not its capital. Therefore, Dantan cannot be assumed as Dantapura of the past. Historical inferences cannot possibly be based only on such alphabetical similarities of the names.

From the story of the tooth relic, it is evident that Kshema handed over the tooth of Buddha to King Brahmadatta of Kalinga at his capital city Dantapura. Hence, the capital city was famous as Dantapura even before the tooth relic was brought in there, and only later, people tried to justify the name Dantapura with reference to the tooth relic. The theory that, even from the beginning, only with reference to the tooth relic, it was named as Dantapura is not easily accepted. Again, the story about the tooth relic and the existence of the tooth relic itself has not yet been accepted as a historical fact. In this situation, the fact that the name of the capital city was Dantapura, with reference to the tooth relic only is not acceptable. Bishan Swarup has also said that the original name of Dantapura was Odantapura. The meaning of Odantapura is like this. 'Od' means Odra or Odisha, 'anta' means the last and 'pur' means city. The meaning of the entire word 'Odantapura' is 'A city based at the border area of Odisha". Hence, it can be said that, it was not a city in Kalinga. It was rather a city of Odisha or that of the kingdom of Odra. During this period there was no rigid and fixed border demarcation between Odisha and Kalinga. Sometimes the Odisha border was extended in to Kalinga and at other times the opposite was happening. As there was no fixed demarcation between the areas of Kalinga and Odisha, the historians are now putting forth many different opinions regarding the border of both the kingdoms. Hence, even if in the beginning Odantapura belonged to Odisha, being a border city, it was also possible that, at some point of time, when the tooth relic was there, it was attached to Kalinga and at that time it was also the capital city of Kalinga. The King of Kalinga might have changed the name to Dantapura from Odantapura as Odantapura was associated with Odisha. Hence, the King of Kalinga making a marginal change in the name of Odantapura, named it Dantapura, and then, as a memorial for his victory, made it his capital city.

It is described in the scriptures of the tooth relic that, after the death the King of Kalinga, Guhashiva, Kalinga was annexed to the kingdom of Odisha. It may be believed or not, but it is true that during the 4th century AD, before the Kesharis ruled Kalinga, though the entire area of Kalinga was not annexed to Odisha, its north boundary was pushed far towards the south. Hence, the capital of Kalinga, Dantapura was occupied by the King of Odisha. It is quite possible that the King of Odisha again changed the name of Dantapura to a name that seemed more appropriate to him. Konarka itself is known as the Padmakshetra (the Sacred Zone of Lotus), it is built on Padmaganda (Lotus Gorge) and again on the top of all the temples at Konarka, a lotus shape was placed as the head of the temple. Above all, the name of the river of this Padmakshetra was Chitrotpala. In this situation, it is quite reasonable to think that the King of Odisha changed the name of Dantapura to Chitrotpala, as a mark of his victory and also as it was more pleasing to the ear and befitting to the special character of the place. Hence, the city described by Hiuen Tsang as Chelitola was actually known as Odantapura in the beginning, later as Dantapura and finally as Chitrotpala.

It is impossible for Dantapura to be any other city than Chitrotpala. Rhys Davids says, citing the evidence in Nikaya, that Dantapura was located on the seashore, in the south-east direction. It is doubtful that there was any other famous city on the south-east seashore except Puri and Chitrotpala. Again, as said earlier, Dantan is not located on the seashore and as per the reasons cited earlier it is impossible for Rajmahendri to be Dantapura. Hence, it is possible that either Puri or Chitrotpala was the city of Dantapura. Earlier, citing the opinion of the writer of Puri Gazetteer, I have said that Dantapura was not the city of Puri. Had Dantapura been the city of Puri, Hiuen Tsang would have definitely visited Puri while travelling Chitrotpala. He visited Odisha within a period of 200 years since the tooth relic was transported to Sri Lanka (Ceylon). Before travelling to Ceylon, Hiuen Tsang would have definitely travelled this mere distance of 20 miles from Chelitola to visit the famous capital city of Dantapura and to see the remnants of the beautiful temple that once housed the tooth relic there. Hiuen Tsang was travelling to find and visit the Buddhist centres and its remnants and was writing about them. He was also writing about the Buddhist scriptures and about the places of India. Had the famous Buddhist place of Dantapura been any other place than Chitrotpala, Hiuen Tsang would have definitely visited the place and have written about it and also about the temple of the tooth relic that once existed there.

It has been said earlier that, at the meeting point of the River Chandrabhaga and the River Kadua, there are two villages located on its banks named, Chitra and Utpala. Near these two villages also exist two other villages in the

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name of Otang and Dhanitri (Page 29). Considering the phonetic similarity or the similarity in their pronunciation, it may be inferred that these two villages are very weak remnants of the old Odantapura or Dantapura.

Hence, it is to be believed that, once up on a time, Konarka and its nearby area was a major flourishing town. Dantapura was situated here, and later this Dantapura was renamed as Chitrotpala. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra also admits that there were Buddhist centres at Konarka and Konarka was located much nearer to the sea than where it is today. The sea now has shifted a little far from this place. Till the period of Abul Fazl, Konarka was a prosperous city. It has been said in Chapter II of this book that, even the Muslims also regarded this place as very sacred. Hence, it may be assumed that this place was sacred for the people of all religions. Gradually, the Buddhist influence on this place declined and finally became non-existent at some point of time. All the Buddhist monuments existing near Chitrotpala gradually deteriorated with the passage of time and finally vanished into the oblivion. Konarka was again converted as a centre of Hindu religion only. Then, as Ekamra Kanan was renamed as Bhubaneswar and Puri as Jagannathpuri and as some other places are being renamed even today, Chitrotpala, after installation of the image of Konarka (Sun God) there, became famous as Konarka. Had Konarka not been a famous and wealthy city, the most beautiful temple of the world would not have been built there. Manomohan Ganguli has rightly said that from the description in *Prachi Mahatmya* it is understood that, there existed many wealthy cities and villages having many beautiful temples on the banks of the River Prachi. Because of the existence of a major centre near this river, the most beautiful temple of the world was built here. Hence, it is justified to say that, Konarka was once a very well known, large and wealthy city.

Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra, finding heaps of bricks at some places, has also said that, there was once a famous city at the place. He also further said that, had it not been the case, the highest and the most beautiful temple of Odisha would not have been built at such a deserted destination.

It becomes comparatively easier to determine the time of construction of the temple at Konarka from the above-cited facts. Before the tooth relic of Buddha was brought in there, Dantapura was already a very famous city. It was so famous at the time of Buddha that, Dantapura or the capital city of Kalinga, being so far away from where Buddha lived his last life, was selected out of all the places in India, as proper for the safekeeping of the tooth relic. This city was famous as Odantapura for quite some time before it assumed the name of Dantapura. Hence, one has to move far back in time, from the period of Buddha, to determine the time when the name Odantapura originated. As described in Chapter I, in *Shamba Upakhyana*, the Shakadwipa Brahmins were initially engaged as the servitors of the Sun God at Konarka. In this chapter, I have also said that many years before the advent of Buddhism, the residents of Shakadwipa were being admitted to and accepted by the society of the Aryans in India without any restrictions. It happened during the period when the Maitreya Bana was in existence. Hence, Maitreya Bana would definitely have been famous even much before Odantapura came into being, simply because it takes many years for the process of converting a dense forest like Maitreya Bana to a wealthy city like Odantapura. Hence, it does not seem to be impossible that, the time period when Shamba installed the Sun God at Maitreya Bana was somewhere around the 19th Century BC, as stated in Chapter I of this Book, a fact which has also been supported by Bishan Swarup through his own reasoning.

Hence, it would not be wrong to say that Konarka, since the days of *Maitreya Bana* till date, or in other words during the last 4000 years of its existence, has retained its historical importance throughout, even after going through so many different transformations.



DANCING WITH STICKS IN HAND
A similar dance form known as Dandia exists in Gujarat of India

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KONARKA TEMPLE COMPLEX - MUKHASHALA AND NATYAMANDIRA (View from the north-east Side)

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CHAPTER IV

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE TEMPLE

The shape and the structure of all the major temples of Odisha look almost similar though the size, the degree of precision, the fineness in sculptural work and their various other constituents vary from temple to temple. The shape and the size of different sections of the temple of Konarka are built with the same proportion as that of the corresponding sections of the temples at Bhubaneswar and Puri. Like the other temples of Odisha, the temple at Konarka also consisted of a *Deula* or *Vimana* (the sanctuary or the main temple) with a *Mukhashala* or *Jagamohan* (porch or the entrance hall). However, unlike in cases of the temples at Puri and Bhubaneswar, where the *Natya Mandira* is constructed adjacent to the *Mukhashala* and the *Deula*, as a continuing part of the temple complex on one common platform, the *Natya Mandira* (dance hall) of Konarka temple is built as an independent structure in front of the main temple and a little away from the *Mukhashala*.

The other speciality in the architecture of the temple of Konarka is that its *Deula* and the *Mukhashala* have both been visualised and constructed to look like a huge chariot (page 70). The temples stand on twenty-four wheels (Page 49) of the chariot and seven horses (Page 48) are attached to the front of the *Mukhashala* giving an impression that the chariot is being drawn forward by them. As described in the epics, the Sun God moves around the universe riding a chariot drawn by seven horses. Again, it is also written in some other scriptures and epics that the Sun rides a chariot drawn by a single white horse having seven heads. Some of the modern critics, to justify the presence of the seven horses, attribute them to the seven planets moving around the Sun. Some others also compare them to the seven individual constituent colours of the white light radiated from the Sun, like violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange and red. Out of these two explanations, it seems more logical to consider the horses to be representing the seven constituent colours of the white light radiating from the Sun than the other explanation relating to the planets. *Ashwa* (Horse) and *Rashmi* (Rays) are originated from the element *"Ash"* which in *Sanskrit* language means "to spread". Hence, it is clearly understood that, the seven horses have been placed on the chariot temple to represent the seven constituent coloured lights of the white light radiated by the Sun. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to justify the presence of the seven horses this way than to attribute them to the seven planets.

Some other scriptures describe the chariot of the Sun with only one wheel. To explain this concept of one wheel, the critics say that, the seven horses or the seven planets are moving around the Sun in one fixed elliptical path. Some others explain that, the seven constituent colours of the sunlight mix in one particular proportion to radiate white light. However, the law of movement of the planets does not seem to have any relationship with the single wheel of the chariot of the Sun. It could have been explained in a better manner had the imagination of the critics been stretched a little bit in a different direction to compare the seven constituent colours of the sunlight to the reins of the seven horses and the *Sarathi* (charioteer) holding the reins in one of his hands. In fact, Aruna is the charioteer of the Sun God. Aruna means the colour "Red". The white light of the sunrays, when diffracted to its seven constituent colours, red comes at the beginning of the spectrum. Some others also explain the concept of the single wheel chariot of the Sun as the one specific law that the Sun accords to travel the universe.

Whatever it may be, the temple of Konarka has twenty-four wheels, not one. One can only imagine a chariot running on a single wheel but, it is not practical in the real world to build a chariot or a temple resting only on a single wheel. Hence, the sculptors of Konarka constructed twenty-four wheels on the temple in place of only one. This breaking of the rules by the sculptors, if we think so, was not baseless or arbitrary. The incorporation of twenty-four wheels to the chariot temple is justified this way. The entire celestial path of the sun is divided in to twelve sections controlled by the twelve *Rashis* or astrological signs. To travel though the universe the Sun has to pass through all these twelve signs during its year long journey. The twenty-four wheels of the temple are assembled as twelve pairs, with each pair joined by an axle representing the twelve sections of the path of the Sun. Bishan Swarup also agrees to this explanation regarding these wheels and their numbers seen on the Sun temple.[1]

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1. BishanSwarup – Konark - P. 19

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ONE OF THE TWENTY-FOUR WHEELS FIXED TO THE COMMON PLINTH OF THE TEMPLE



ONE OF THE SEVEN HORSES DRAWING THE CHARIOT TEMPLE

The one foot high platform decorated with a string of elephants is seen at the bottom which runs around the entire length of the platform at all sides of the common plinth of the Main Temple and the Mukhashala.

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Looking at its present condition, it is almost impossible for any writer to describe the temple of Konarka properly, faithfully and in detail. Add to it our incompetence to appreciate such a marvellous piece of architecture critically and knowledgeably. We are completely ignorant about the concepts of art and science behind our ancient architecture and sculpture and very inept to demand the spectacular technical and artistic capabilities of our ancestors as our heritage. Till date not a single book on the ancient architectural and sculptural technology of Odisha has been published. Leave aside the ability to analyse and interpret the architectural splendour, even the meaning of the very word "architecture" is probably unknown to many of us. It is impossible for us even to imagine how much knowledge, experience and imagination of our ancestors have gone into the construction of any of the temples in Odisha. Again, Konarka is regarded by everybody as a temple representing the highest level of achievement in the field of Kalinga architecture and sculptural grandeur, making it quite natural for any writer to fail while trying to meaningfully explain its art and architecture. Konarka is not the work of only this age or of this millennium. It is a product of the refined skill, experience, dedication and practice of the sculptors and the architects that have accumulated over the time and transferred from one generation to the next generation and then to the next, for ages and ages together. Konarka displays the highest level of skill and development of sculptural art and architecture of Odisha and, at the same time, it also shows the amount of knowledge, skill and experience that have been accumulated and assimilated by the artisans since the beginning of the history of mankind and then how all of these have been applied to create each individual work on this temple. While looking at the motifs of the creepers and the leaves carved on the temple, the mind of the critic does not remain confined to the piece of stone containing these images, rather it floats in the river of his imagination exploring the thought, the level of skill, the development of the art, the dedication of the artists, the deep thinking and the experience gathered over the ages that have gone into creating these marvellous objects in stone. The spectator, looking at these wonderful pieces of art, gets stunned and goes speechless. In the background of each sculptural element seen at Konarka, reside a vast knowledge base and the level of skill that has been accumulated since the origin of the Indian architectural tradition. It is impossible for this tiny book and this weak writing instrument to describe properly all the traditions, family festivals, religious problems and the dedicated efforts reflected on this temple through sculpture.



THE COMMON PLINTH OF THE TEMPLE COMPLEX CARRYING EXTENSIVE CARVINGS AND THE WHEELS

Apart from all the difficulties mentioned above, another major problem encountered by the critics is that now only a small portion of the temple exists. It is possible to describe properly only the portion that exists today. The main temple has already collapsed. When Andrew Sterling, Dr. J. Fergusson, Dr. W. W. Hunter and Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra visited the place, the temple complex was buried under a heap of sand and stones. They even did not have a chance to see that much of the temple what the visitors of today get to see. Before them, only Abul Fazl (the famous chronicler in the court of Akbar) had described the temple of Konarka in his famous book *Ain-i-Akbari*. He travelled to Odisha towards the end of the 16th Century AD. In fact he, himself did not visit Konarka. His description about Konarka is based only on what he heard from others. The excerpts from his book are stated below.[1]

"Near Jaganaut is the temple of the Sun, in the erecting of which was expended the whole revenue of Orissa for twelve years. No one can behold this immense edifice without being struck with amazement. The wall which surrounds the whole is one hundred and fifty cubits high, and nineteen cubits thick. There are three entrances to

1. Abul Fazl - *"Ain-I-Akbari"* -Translated by Francis Gladwin- Vol. II. P. 15

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it. At the eastern gate are two very fine figures of elephants, each with a man upon his trunk. To the west are two surprising figures of horsemen, completely armed; and over the northern gate are carved two tigers, who having killed two elephants, are sitting upon them. In the front of the gate is a pillar of black stone, of an octagonal form, fifty cubits high. There are nine flights of steps after ascending which, you come into an extensive enclosure, where you discover a large dome, constructed of stone, upon which are carved the sun and the stars, and around them is a border, where are represented a variety of human figures expressing the different passions of the mind; some kneeling, others prostrated with their faces upon the earth; together with the minstrels, and a number of strange and wonderful animals, such as never existed but in imagination. This is said to be a seven hundred and thirty years' antiquity. Raja Nursing Deo finished this building, thereby erecting for himself a lasting monument of fame.* There are twenty-eight other temples belonging to this pagoda, six before the northern gate, and twenty-two within the enclosure; and they are all reported to have performed miracles."[1]

Certain facts in the above-mentioned description given by Abul Fazl are not true. This chapter and the next will examine the authenticity and the correctness of Abul Fazl's statements about the temple of Konarka.



LOWER BARANDI OF THE PLINTH

FOOT NOTE: Calculation of the present value of 12 years revenue of the province of Odisha spent in construction of the Konarka temple –
During the rule of the Kesharis area of Odisha was 11, 000 square miles and it was expanded to 1, 39, 407 square miles at the time of Anangabhima Deba of Ganga dynasty. As per *Madala Panji*, at the time of the Kesharis the yearly revenue collection was 15, 00, 000 *Madhha* gold and at the time of Anangabhima Deba It was 35, 00, 000 *Madhha* gold and from the forest properties an additional 12, 88, 000 *Madhha* gold were being generated. The total revenue was around 47, 88, 000 *Madhha* gold or 23, 94, 000 *Tola* of gold. The price of silver to that of gold was in the ratio of 1:10 at the time of the rule of Allahauddin Khilliz. 23, 94, 000 Tolas of gold was equivalent to 2, 39, 40, 000 Tolas of silver. 54% of the silver One Rupee coin was pure silver. Hence, the yearly revenue generated in Utkal was equal to ((2, 39, 40, 000 X 100)/54 = 13, 30, 00, 000/3) = 4, 43, 33, 333 1/3 Rupees. So the 12 years revenue that was spent for building the temple of Konarka is (4, 43, 33, 333 1/3 Rupees X 12=) 53, 20, 00, 000 Rupees or Fifty-three crores and twenty lakh Rupees - Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra - Utkal Itihasa.

Hence, the revenue being collected at the time of Narasingha Deba, the builder of Konarka temple can be taken as the same as that in the period of Anangabhima Deba, If not more. 35, 00, 000 *Madhha* is equal to 17, 50, 000 *Tola*. The proportion of the cost of silver to gold at that time can be assumed as 1:10. As per Dr. Hunter, during Akbar's rule, this ratio was 1:9.4 and during Allahauddin Khilliz's reign it was 1:10.Hence, 17, 50, 000 *Tola* gold was equivalent to 1 75, 00, 000 *Tola* of silver. At the time of Dr. Hunter, there were 165 grains in place of 180 grains of pure silver in a Rupee coin. So In one Tola the content of silver was less by 15 grains or 15/180 parts or 1/12 parts. The then present value of 1, 75, 00, 000 *Tola* silver in terms of Rupee coins was ((1, 75, 00, 000 + (1, 75, 00, 000)1/12) = (1, 75, 00, 000 + 1458333 1/3) = 1, 89, 58, 333 1/3 Rupees of yearly revenue. Hence 12 years revenue is equal to (1, 89, 58, 333 1/3 Rupees X 12) = 22, 75, 00, 000 Rupees or Twenty-two crores and Seventy-five lakh Rupees.

Manomohan Ganguli has assumed this yearly revenue of Odisha as 3, 00, 00, 000 (3 Crore) Rupees. - Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P. 483

1. Abul Fazl - *"Ain-i-Akbari"* - Translated by Dr. Blochmann & Jarrett

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PEETHA, PRUSTHA OR UPANA (THE PLINTH)

The *Vimana* or *Deula* (the main temple) and the *Mukhashala* (porch) at Konarka are built over a common platform. Such a beautiful and high platform is not seen either at the temple of Bhubaneswar or at Puri. This is a special feature of the temple at Konarka which heightens its beauty and makes it appear more sturdy and strong. The *Peetha* (plinth) of the temple is built over this platform of height 1 foot (Page 52). The face or edge of this platform is beautifully carved with a row of elephants all around its periphery. (Page 63 & 64) At places, between two elephants, the scenes of hunting and some activities of family life have also been carved on it. On this platform are placed the wheels and the horses along with the *Peetha* (plinth) of the temple (Page 58)

This *Peetha* (plinth)is divided in to two sections, like -

Sections	Height
Tala Peetha (Lower Plinth)	13 ft. and 3 inches
Upara Peetha or *Khuraprusthha* (Upper Plinth)	2 ft. and 3 inches
Total height	**15 ft. and 6 inches**

Hence, the total height of the *Peetha* (plinth) including the platform is equal to (1 foot + 15 feet 6 inches) 16 feet and 6 inches, meaning that the main temple and the porch are built at a height of 16 feet and 6 inches from the ground. A huge veranda of width ranging from 8 feet to 12 feet is laid over the *Tala Peetha* (lower plinth) running around the main temple and the porch.

The *Tala Peetha* (lower plinth) is divided into five sections, like

Sections	Height
Tala Jangha (lower Jangha	2 ft. and 11 inches
Tala Barandi (lower Barandi)	2 ft. and 9 inches
Bandhana (between lower & upper Jangha)	1 ft. and 0 inches
Upara Barandi (upper Barandi)	3 ft. and 10 inches
Upara Jangha (upper Jangha)	2 ft. and 9 inches
Total height	**13 ft. and 3 inches**

Jangha is usually divided in to five sections known as *Pancha Karma* or *Pancha Kama* (five sections of decoration). Beginning from the lowest level, the names of these five sections are *Pada, Kumbha, Pata, Kani* and *Basanta* respectively. The names of these sections are given as per their shapes. The face of the *Pada* (foot) is carved beautifully with creeper motifs and the *Marani* (shaped to gradually recess inwards with height) on the top with inverted lotus flowers. Above the *Pada* comes the *Kumbha* section. *Kumbha* does not bear any carvings and hence creates a separation between the *Pada* below it and the *Pata* above. The *Pata* is decorated with creeper motifs

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having some animal motifs at places. *Kani* again does not have any carvings. Like the *Pada, Basanta* is decorated with the creeper motifs. The entire *Jangha* is decorated with many beautiful pillars placed at regular intervals along its length and carved with different types of creeper motifs.



THE COMMON PLINTH OF THE TEMPLE COMPLEX
The one foot high platform carved with a row of elephants is seen at the bottom, just below the wheel. Above it is the Tala Peetha consisting of Tala Jangha, Tala Barandi and then Upara Jangha and Upara Barandi with a Bandhana separating the two.

Tala Barandi (lower Barandi), also known as *Shakara,* comes after *Tala Jangha* (lower Jangha). The portion indented between the *Jangha* and the *Bandhani* is known as *Barandi.* The *Barandi* is divided into various small compartments by the *Pagas* or the pillars.These *Pagas* are built in the shape of small temples of *Pidhha* type. Some other pillars present here are known as *Shardula Stambha* (lion pillar) and each of them has a *Naga Stamba* on its side. The *Naga Kanyas* (Page 228) sculpted on these *Naga Stambhas* are shown as human figures with the lower portion of their bodies, down the west, assuming the shape and look of a snake and the upper portion as that of a beautiful woman. Here the body of the snake is beautifully carved with jeweller's precision. Apart from it, there are also other female figures placed on some of the *Pagas.* The space between the two *Pagas* is filled with honeycomb motifs (Page 201). Likewise, every inch of the *Barandi* has been filled with fine carvings of many different types.

Above the *Barandi* comes the *Bandhana.* The *Bandhana* is like a raised wide border which runs horizontally around the entire *Peetha* separating the *Upara Barandi* (upper Barandi) from the *Tala Barandi* (lower Barandi). *Bandhana* is divided in to three sections like, (i) *Pada,* (ii) *Dori* and (iii) *Pata.* Hence it is known as *Trikarma* or *Tini Kama Bandhana* (with three sections of decoration). *Pada* is decorated with creeper motifs with animals carved at certain places at equal intervals. *Dori* is decorated with beadstrings having lotus petals at its top and bottom portions. It separates the carvings on the *Pada* from that on the *Pata* remaining as a thin line in between them. The carvings on *Pata* are similar to that of the *Pada.* Next is the *Upara Barandi* (upper Barandi) or *Shikara* which, like the *Tala Barandi,* is divided by the *Pagas* into many compartments. The differences between the two *Barandis,* that is, the upper *Barandi* and the lower *Barandi* are that, compartments here are comparatively larger, the *Pagas* are rectangular in shape and are not built in the shape of small temples (Page 52). These *Pagas* are well decorated with very fine motifs of creepers, flowers and also with animals like deer, etc. carved at regular intervals within them. The lower portion of the *Paga* is carved out like a lotus petal with *Marani.* These lotus petals may be regarded as the *Pada* or foot of the *Paga.* Above the foot of each *Paga* are located the *Kumbha* and the *Basanta* sections. The front of the *Pada* and the *Basanta* are filled with creeper motifs. In each compartment, between two *Pagas,* three to four figures are carved. The visitor gets spellbound looking at these beautifully sculptured figures. Most of these statues are of couples in obscene posture.

A few of these scenes not having obscene content are described in the following pages.

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HUNTING SCENE – HUNTING OF A TIGER
This is though not the exact scene described here, it is a similar one.

01. The Hunting Scene -

A hunter is seated on horseback after killing a tiger and a deer. This sculpture is badly damaged. The interesting fact here is that the image of the tiger is not usually seen on any temple elsewhere in Odisha and not even at any other place on the temple of Konarka excepting in this particular scene.

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DIFFERENT TYPES OF CREEPER MOTIFFS LIKE BANALATA, PATRALATA, LATILATA AND PHULALATA, ETC.

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THE COURT OF THE KING - THE KING RECEIVES A ZIRAF AS A GIFT
The scene is described by Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra as the King's Court.
It indicates the existence of commercial relationship of Odisha with Africa.

02. The Court of the King -

The King is seen sitting on an elephant and some persons in long dresses *(chapkan)* standing in front of him and presenting him with an animal looking like a camel having horns too.

***FOOT NOTE:** As per *Shilpa Shastra* (the ancient scripture on architecture and sculpture) there are four types of creeper motifs like, (a) *Phula Lata* or flowering creepers where the flowers dominate the scene, (b) *Lati Lata* or creepers with branches, leaves and also flowers, (c) *Patra Lata* or creepers having only leaves and (d) *Bana Lata* where the creepers are crowded with thick leaves. (Page 54)

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THE KING WORSHIPPING SHIVA, JAGANNATHA AND MAHISHAMARDINI DURGA PLACED ON ONE PLATFORM

The scene indicates the close relationship amongst thethree sects, Shaiva, Vaishnav and Shakta of Hindu religion



TAMING THE WILD ANIMAL (CIRCUS)



A BATTLE SCENE

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03. The Worship Scene -

This scene is quite interesting. On one of the two beautifully carved pandals are placed images of Shiva Lingam, Jagannatha and Mahishamardini Durga. The king, along with his elephant and the subordinates, is standing there to worship the idols. This sculpture is now transferred to the new house built by the government and kept there carefully. This scene will be discussed in detail in Chapter X.

The part of the temple immediately located above the *Barandi* is called *Upara Jangha* or the upper *Jangha*. The *Upara Jangha* is usually divided into seven sections like, *Pata, Pheni, Kani, Basanta* and again *Kani, Pheni* and *Basanta* which are together known as *Sapta Karma* or *Sata Kama* (seven sections of decoration). However, the *Sata Kama* system is not adopted everywhere. In the upper *Jangha* of the *Bada* of the *Mukhashala* (porch) of the temple of Konarka one finds *Dasa Kama* (Chapter VI) or ten sections of decoration in it and on the *Jangha* of the *Upara Peetha* only *Tini Kama* or three sections of decoration are found. Out of all these three, the first section consists of elephants and various scenes from the war. The middle one is decorated with honeycomb motifs and is a little indented from the first and the third section. The third section is ruined and not present there. However, the author of this Book assumes that this space was also decorated with elephant motifs. The *Peetha* is now broken at many places. Specially, at the western side no carvings or sculptures exist today. The artwork of honeycomb motifs is in good condition only at the place under the *Mukhashala*.



THE KING ENGAGED IN A RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE



A ROYAL VISIT

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ONE OF THE TWENTY-FOUR WHEELS PLACED ON THE PLINTH
The one foot high platform decorated with a string of elephants is seen below the wheel



CLOSE-UP OF THE SPOKES AND THE HUB OF THE WHEEL



CLOSE-UP OF THE CENTRE OF A BROAD SPOKE

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The Wheel - (Page 58 to 62)

As said earlier, the temple of Konarka was built like the chariot of the Sun God. There were 24 wheels on its *Peetha* (Plinth). The positions of the wheels on the chariot temple are given below–

The Structure	Location of the Wheels	Number of Wheels
Main Temple *(Bada Deula)*	On the South Side	06
Main Temple *(Bada Deula)*	On the North Side	06
The Porch *(Mukhashala)*	On the South Side	04
The Porch *(Mukhashala)*	On the North Side	04
On the Eastern Steps *(Mukhashala)*	On its South Side	02
On the Eastern Steps of the Porch *(Mukhashala)*	On its North Side	02
Total Number of Wheels on the Temple		24

The wheels are placed on the lower platform of the temple. The diameter of each wheel is 9 feet and 9 inches. There are eight broad spokes and eight narrow spokes connecting the felly to the hub of the wheel. The diameter of the hub is 1 foot and 10 inches and the axle protrudes by 11 inches through its centre. The diameter of the axle end is 9 inches. Each spoke from the felly to the hub of the wheel is 3 feet 3 inches in length. Some of the wheels are not seen now as they have completely broken off the temple. Some others are partly broken and some are on the verge of breaking down. Only four wheels on the south side and another three on the north are intact. The beauty of these wheels is beyond one's ability to describe in words. Right from the axle pin to the felly, the wheel is full of very fine ornamental and decorative carvings. The broad spokes, starting from the felly end and also from the hub end, are gradually broadened up to their centres. Some beautiful carvings are present on the broadened centre point of each spoke, for example, a horse-mounted soldier, a mahout riding the elephant, a king sitting on a bed with pillows and a few subordinates standing nearby and many other such scenes including some obscene ones also. The other portion of the spokes bears different types of scrollwork. The narrow spokes are decorated with beadstrings. The front of the hub of the wheel is decorated with beadstrings and a row of lotus petals. The front portion of the axle projecting outward through the hub is also beautifully carved. On different wheels different artwork is seen on the protruding face of the axle. On some of the wheels, the image of Gajalakshmiis carved where Goddess Lakshmi (the Goddess of Wealth) is sitting in *Padmasana* (lotus pose) between two elephants, standing one on each of her sides and pouring water over her head. In some other wheels the image of Nrusingha tearing apart Hiranya Kashipu lying on his lap is also present. Likewise, there are many other such carvings decorating the axle ends.



GAJA-LAKSHMI CARVED ON PROJECTING EDGE OF THE AXLE

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THE HUB OF THE WHEEL AND THE LOCKING PIN ATTACHED TO IT



NRUSINGHA AVATAR OF VISHNU CARVED ON
THE PROJECTING OUTER PART OF THE AXLE
Vishnu in Nrusingha Avatara (Upper part of the body is that of a lion and the lower is of a human) is tearing apart Hiranya Kashipu to save his devotee Prahlada

There is a pin (locking pin) on each axle fixed at each hub of the wheels to keep them in place as is done in case of bullock carts in the real world. This pin is also decorated with beautiful carvings. The upper border of the felly and the area under it are decorated with excellent scrollwork of string beads and tree branches. Within these branch scrolls, the scenes of human beings, birds and animals are also carved at certain places. The area at the upper and the lower portions of the felly are decorated with the scrolls of creeper motifs which can very well be named as leafy creeper scrolls. This way the entire wheel, with all its parts elegantly carved, looks extremely pleasing and beautiful.

There is a huge veranda 8 to 12 feet wide located above the upper *Jangha*. The *Kharaprusthha* or the upper plinth starts at a height of 2 feet and 3 inches above this veranda. Over this *Kharaprusthha* (upper plinth), the Deula (the main temple) and the *Mukhashala* (the porch) are built. The *Kharaprusthha* is also known as *Padmaprusthha* (the lotus plinth). Like the Pada of the Peetha, this upper plinth is built of two layers of stone. On the front or face of these two layers scrollwork of tree branches has been done and its upper portion is carved beautifully with inverted lotus petals gradually rising indented towards the inner side assuming the shape of a *Marani*. The space between these two layers of stone is decorated with honeycomb scrollwork. The *Deula* (main temple) and the *Mukhashala* (the porch) are built over this *Padmaprusthha*.

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A FEMALE FIGURE CARVED ON THE WHEEL



CLOSE-UP OF THE CENTRE OF A BROAD SPOKE



SHIVA AT THE CENTRE OF A BROAD SPOKE

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A HORSE MOUNTED WARRIOR CARVED ON THE PROJECTING PART OF THE AXLE OF THE WHEEL



ONE OF THE TWENTYFOUR WHEELS OF THE CHARIOT TEMPLE BEING IN NEAR PERFECT CONDITION

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CATCHING WILD ELEPHANTS WITH THE HELP OF TAMED ONES


CATCHING AND TAMING THE WILD ELEPHANTS


UPSTREAM THE RIVER A HERD OF ELEPHANTS FIGHTING WITH A CROCODILE


ELEPHANTS BEING TAKEN CARE OF


A ROW OF ELEPHANTS PASSING THROUGH THE JUNGLE

All the above scenes are carved on the front of the one foot high bottom platform of the plinth

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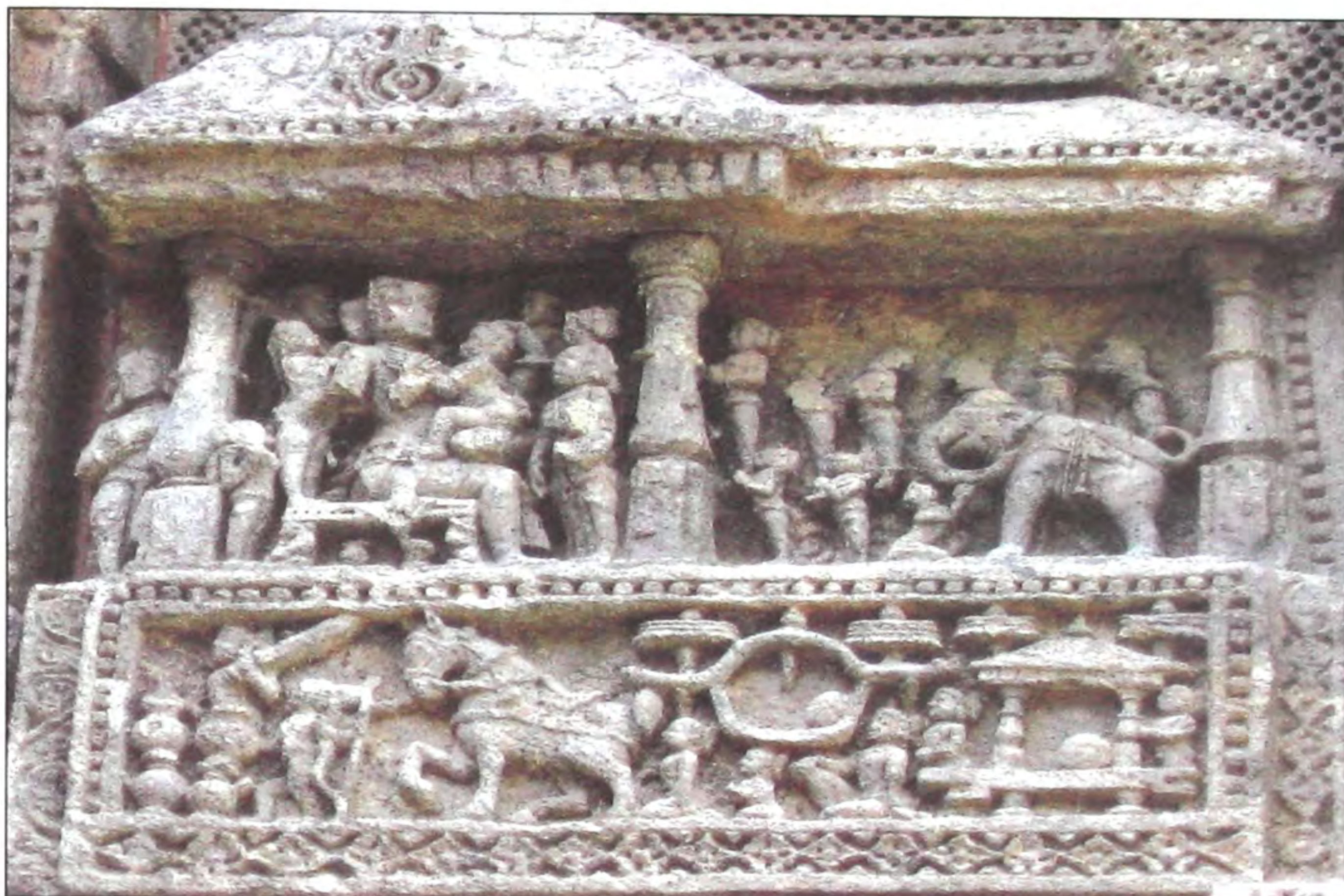
ANOTHER ROW OF ELEPHANTS CARVRD ON FRONT OF THE PLATFORM



A HERD OF ELEPHANTS PASSING THROUGH THE FOREST
Carved on the bottom platform of the temple

THE KING DEMONSTRATING HIS SKILL IN ARCHERY

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THE KING CARESSING HIS CHILD JUST BEFORE A TRIP



THE COURT OF THE KING

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THE KING AND THE QUEEN VISITING KONARKA TEMPLE DURING ITS CONSTRUCTION

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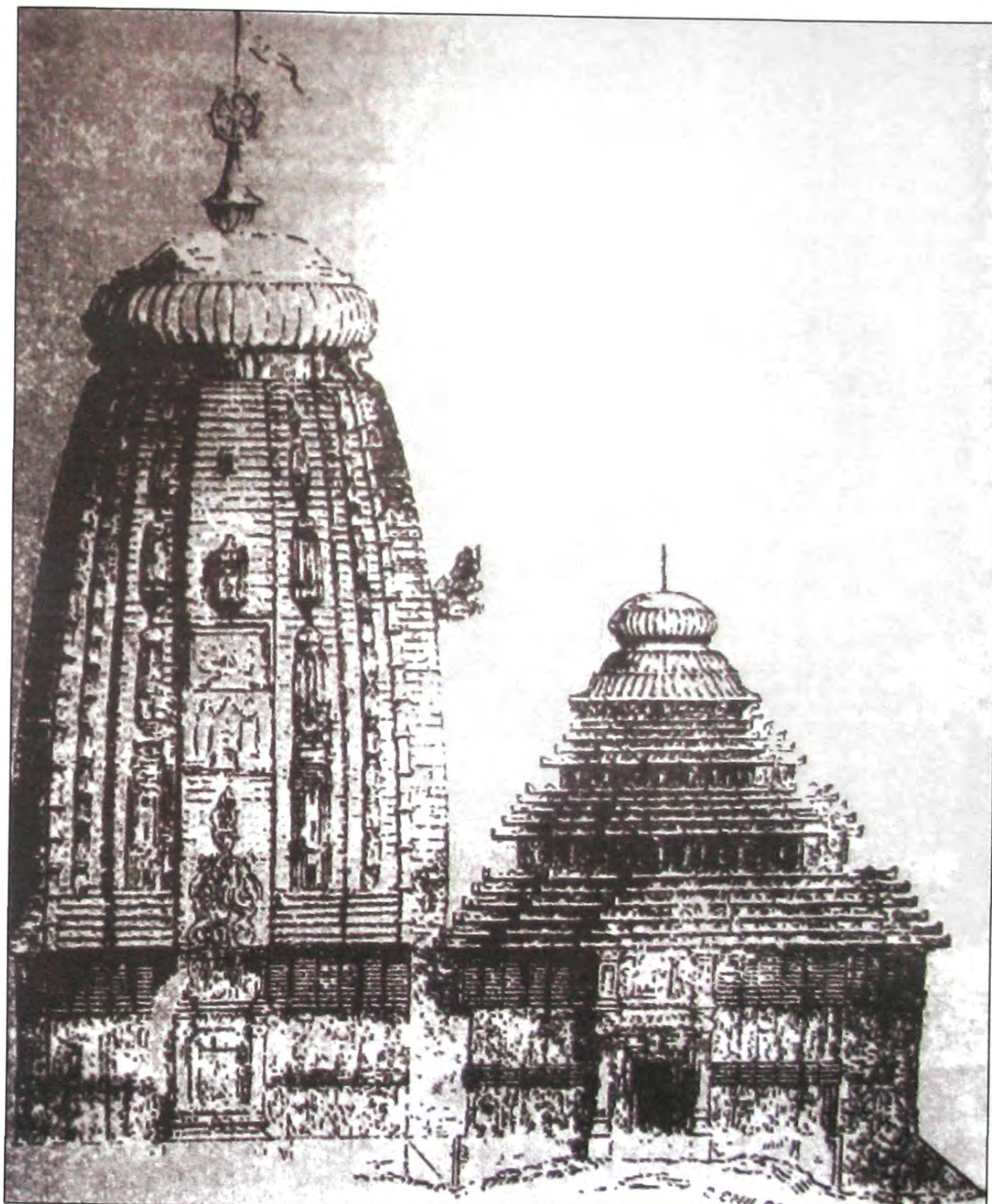
THE KING ENGAGED IN A DISCUSSION WITH HIS MINISTERS

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A SCENE CARVED ON THE PLINTH INVOLVING THE ROYALS

THE KING ENGAGED IN A RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE

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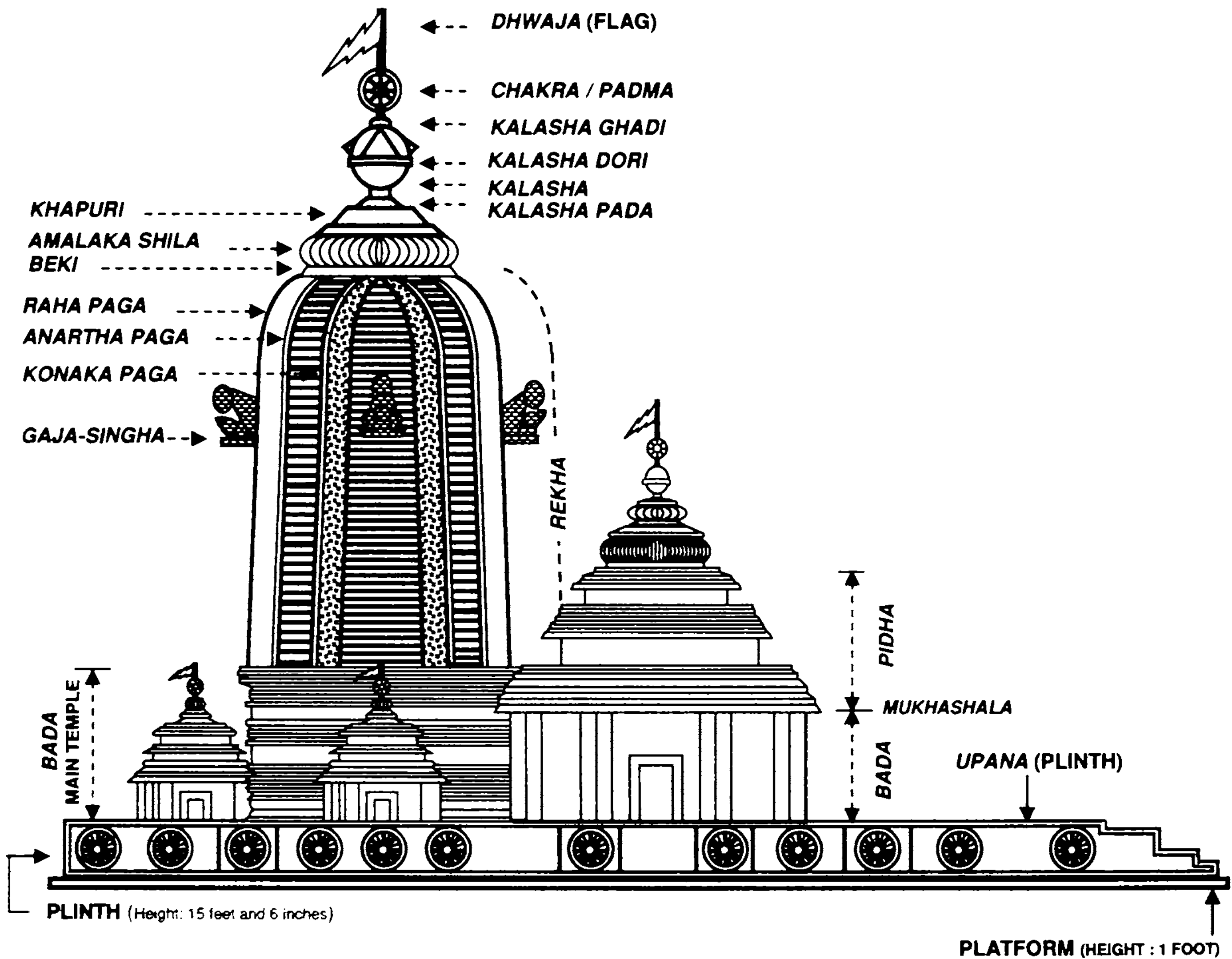
COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

JAMES FERGUSSON'S RECONSTRUCTED PICTURE OF KONARKA TEMPLE

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THE CHARIOT TEMPLE OF SUN GOD

(KONARKA TEMPLE COMPLEX)



For better legibility this sketch has been redrawn with close proximity to the version given in the original book.

The two sketches given in the original book, one represented by the above sketch and the other given in the next page, were drawn by Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra himself. He spent almost six months in Konarka to conduct on-site research and taking the measurements of different portions of the temple before drawing these sketches and writing the book.

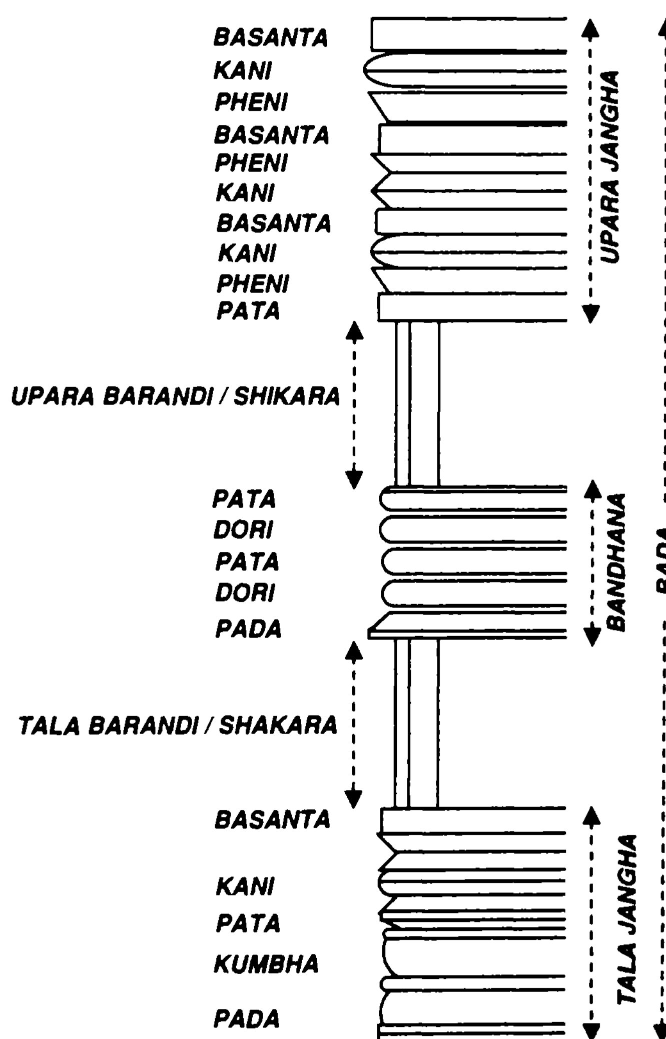
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CHAPTER V

BADA DEULA
(THE MAIN TEMPLE)

The main temple, usually known as the *Vimana* or *Deula* in local terms, is built on the west of the *Mukhashala*. It does not have a door of its own to allow entry from outside as the entree is always made through the *Mukhashala* only. The main temple of Konarka has already collapsed sparing only a portion of the *Bada*, up to a height of thirty feet above the ground, which stands there now. From whatever is surviving, the huge size of the temple and the beautiful, elegant and prominent sculptural art it was decorated with can very well be imagined. On examining the surviving portion of the main temple of Konarka, it becomes apparent that its architecture has been greatly influenced by that of the temples at Bhubaneswar and Puri. Like the *Bada* of the temple at Bhubaneswar, the Bada of the temple of Konarka is also divided in to five sections like, *Tala Jangha, Tala Barandi, Bandhana, Upara Barandi* and *Upara Jangha* and also they carry similar type of sculptural work in its respective sections to those in the temple of Bhubaneswar. Still then, the speciality of the temple of Konarka is that, all the sculptural carvings have been done on it with extreme details and precision making them look very prominent and beautiful. The huge size of the temple made it a little easier for the sculptors to execute their work with a jeweller's precision thereby offering them an opportunity to stretch their skill to the extreme level and show it to the world.

DETAILS OF THE BADA OF MAIN TEMPLE



For better legibility this sketch has been redrawn with close proximity to the version given in the original book

As said in the previous chapter, the main temple and the porch are built on a plinth decorated with two layers of lotus carvings and leaving aside 8 to 12 feet at all its sides as veranda.

Like the temples at Puri and Bhubaneswar, the temple at Konarka is a *Pancharatha* temple having five *Pagas* or pillars built into its walls on all sides (Pages 70 & 75). The middle pillar or *Paga* is known as *Raha Paga*. The pillars on its both sides are known as *Anartha Paga* and the last two are known as *Konaka Paga* being located at the corner of the walls. Construction of these *Pagas* and their projections from the walls are distinctly maintained throughout, from the bottom of the temple to the *Beki* or the neck of it.

The first section of the temple from its bottom is known as *Bada*, which is present in temples of all kinds. In this section, from the beginning to the end, the walls of the temple rise vertically without any horizontal displacement or inclination. From the top of this *Bada* the roof of the temple is constructed.The temple is classified as per the type of construction used for the roof. Two types of roofs are seen at the temple of Konarka, namely *Rekha* and *Pidha*. The roof of the main temple is of *Rekha* type and that of the porch is of *Pidha* type. In case of a *Pidha* type temple, the roof is built by placing a layer of stone slabs over another layer, a little indented towards the inside of the temple so that, with placement of each successive layer the opening at the top is progressively reduced while

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maintaining its original shape. Likewise, after laying a few layers of stone, the opening at the top of the temple is closed. Hence, the inside of a *Pidha* type temple looks like an inverted staircase. However, in the case of *Rekha* type temple, not a single stone slab projects beyond its lower layer. It is constructed in one line from the beginning to the end of the roof with the line gradually bending inwards uniformly from all sides with the successive increase in its height. In this process the opening at the top gradually gets smaller and smaller with increase in height of the construction until it gets almost closed. On this closed roof, the top portion of the temple consisting of sections like *Beki* (Neck), *Amalaka Shila* and *Khapuri*, etc., are placed. The main temple of Konarka is of *Rekha* type like those at Bhubaneswar and Puri.



The *Bada* of the main temple of Konarka begins from the Lotus Plinth. The complete portion of the *Bada* does not exist now and the survived portion is so damaged that, it is very difficult to describe the sculptural decoration that was once adorning it. Even then, examining the few undamaged portions still standing there, the work once existing on the damaged portions can be visualised to some extent.



THE ABOVE PICTURES ARE TWO DIFFERENT PORTIONS OF THE BOTTOM OF THE BADA OF MAIN TEMPLE

Like the *Peetha*, the *Bada* of the temple is also divided in to five different sections like *Tala Jangha, Tala Barandi, Bandhana, Upara Barandi* and *Upara Jangha*. Here the *Jangha* is 13 feet and 6 inches in height and consists of *Pancha Kama* or five sections of decoration like *Pada, Kumbha, Pata, Kani* and *Basanta*. The carvings on *Jangha* of the *Bada* are almost similar to that of the *Jangha* of the *Pidha*. *Pada* is carved with creeper motifs and on its upper part, on the *Marani*, inverted lotus petals are seen. In between, there is only one *Dori* and no other work is seen on the *Kumbha*. The *Dori* separates the carvings on *Pada* from that of *Pata*. *Pata* is carved with beautiful leaf and creeper motifs. The *Jangha* of the *Peetha* has a thin *Kani* having no carvings on it. However, in the *Bada* of the main temple, the *Kani* of the *Jangha* is comparatively wider and hence, to maintain proportionate separation between the two decorated portions, the *Kani* also has been carved for decoration. The upper and the lower portions of the *Kani* are carved with

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A SURVIVING PORTION OF THE BADA OF MAIN TEMPLE

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lotus petals having bead strings in between. The *Basanta* is carved with creeper motifs like that on the *Pada*. All the carvings on *Jangha* run around the temple in parallel to the lotus plinth. To differentiate it from others, the sculptors have carved some vertical pillars from the bottom to the top of the *Jangha* at equal intervals in the shape of *Pidha* type temples decorated all over with beautiful ornamental carvings.



A HYBRID ANIMAL OF GAJA AND SINGHA
- A celestial being killing a demon
Carved on the Bada of Main Temple

***Tala Barandi* or *Shakara* (Lower *Barandi*)–**

Shakara or *Tala Barandi* is located above *Tala Jangha*. The *Bada* of the main temple is completely broken from this *Barandi*. Only the *Barandi*, the *Bandhana* and some portions of the *Upara Barandi* adjacent to the *Mukhashala* are seen today. The *Barandi* is usually divided into four parts like, *Kharaprusthha*, *Bada*, *Chala* (roof) and *Mastaka* (head). The lowest portion of *Barandi* is known as *Kharaprusthha* or the upper *Peetha*. It is carved with bead string motifs. Above it is the *Bada*. The three images of *Suryanarayana* facing the north, the south and the west directions have been placed as *Parshwa Devata* (auxiliary deities placed on the body of the temple) on the *Barandi* of the *Raha Paga* (middle pillar) of the *Bada*. These three images of *Parshwa Devata* are still present there today. The image of a backward looking lion pounced on an elephant with the two hind legs placed on it and the front legs raised, is placed on the *Barandi* between *Konaka Paga* (corner pillar) and the *Anartha Paga* (pillar located between the corner and the middle pillars). This type of sculpture is known in local language as *Olata Gaja-Biraja Singha*. The image of the lion placed on the *Barandi* between the *Anartha Paga* and the *Raha Paga* is known as *Olata Gaja-Singha*. Here, the image of a hunting lion is seen pounced on an inverted elephant with the two hind legs placed on it and the front legs raised. The elephant holds a male or a female figure with its trunk. Presently, only a small portion of this particular sculpture is seen. All these lion images used to exist on the *Barandi* portion of each of these smaller *Pidha* type temples. On these images the roof and the *Mastaka* (head) of these smaller temples were rested.

***Bandhana* –**

Bandhana of the *Bada*, unlike that of the *Peetha*, does not have *Tini Karma*, i.e., divided in to three decorative sections. It is of *Pancha Kama* type or has five sections such as, *Pada*, *Dori*, and *Pata*, and again *Dori* and then *Pata*. The *Pada* is carved with lotus petals and creeper motifs. *Dori* does not bear any carvings. *Pata* is carved with creeper motifs like that on the *Pada*. Likewise the upper *Pata* is also decorated and the *Bandhana* runs horizontally and uniformly around the temple.

***Upara Barandi* or *Shikara* (Upper *Barandi*) –**

The *Upara Barandi* or the *Shikara* comes next, above the *Bandhana*. Now, only a very small part of this *Shikara* is seen near the *Mukhashala*. Finding many obscene images carved on the upper *Barandi* of the *Mukhashala*, Bishan Swarup assumes that obscene images were also carved on the upper *Barandi* of the main temple. However, his assumption is not right. It is found from observation of the temples at Puri and Bhubaneswar, that the obscene images are placed only on the *Mukhashala* and never on the walls of the main temple. It might quite naturally be assumed that this rule would not have been broken by the sculptors for the temple of Konarka. In fact, there is a full figure *Sakhi* image (female figure) found on the surviving upper *Barandi* of the *Bada* of the main temple near the *Mukhashala*, and no obscene images are seen there. Perhaps, eight *Sakhis* were carved near the eight *Anartha Pagas* of the temple.

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The height of different portions of the main temple and that of the respective portions on *Mukhashala* are not the same. Hence, there is a gap created to manage the difference between the various similar sections of both the structures. The work on this gap has not been done in parallel to the *Padma Peetha* (Lotus Plinth), but in a vertical manner in the form of pillars decorated with scrolls of creeper motifs. Its upper part is not seen any more. At its lower part exists a strange lion image. Describing this image - a rampart lion is standing on an elephant with his two hind legs. It has a chain attached to its mouth and the other end is held by a woman riding the lion. A portion of the chain is hanging down. The furious expression created by the burning eye (Page 78), the contracted nose and the upright ears of the lion create fear in the minds of the onlookers. The hair grown on the face of the lion and the chain carved on this sculpture look quite real. Such images, known as *Chhida-Uda-Gaja-Singha* in local terms, are not seen at any other part of the temple (Page 76 to 78). Thinking about the concept of this image, it comes to the mind that, like the males expressing their bravery, the females, in spite of their usual soft nature of a mother and that of a wife, also were occasionally getting in to the act. Of course, this scene may be imaginary, but even then, quite often, the imaginary world carries a link with the experiences acquired in the real world. On one side, the image shows a female figure riding the lion and the other side shows the lion with a male figure riding it.

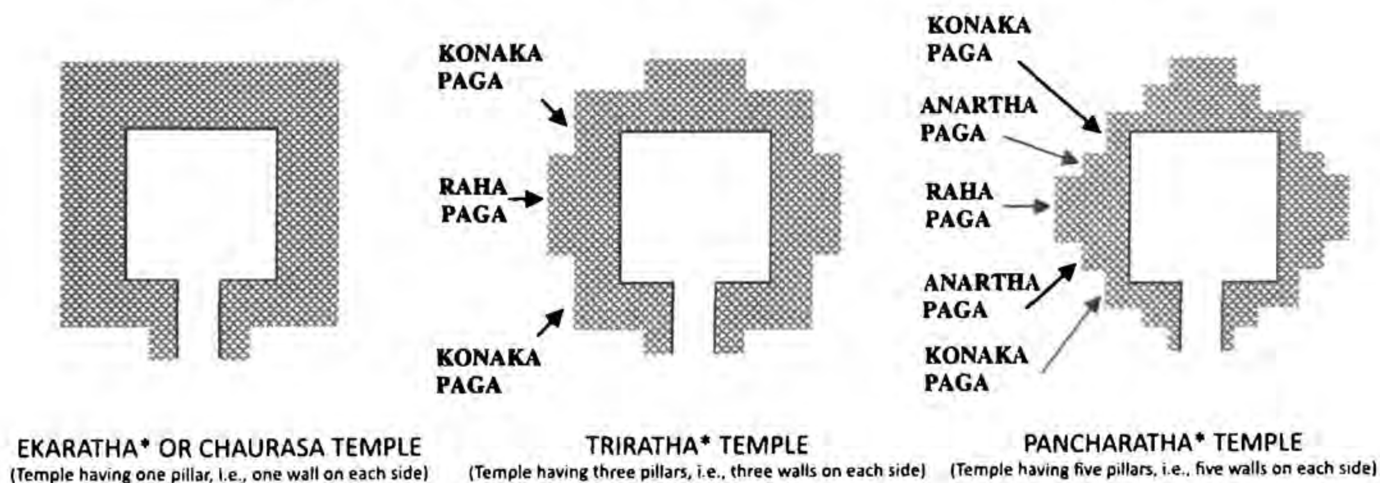


COURTESY : TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

GANESHA AND LAXMI

This beautiful sculpture once adorning the main temple of Konarka is now displayed at the British Museum, London.

HORIZONTAL CROSS-SECTION OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF TEMPLES IN ODISHA



EKARATHA* OR CHAURASA TEMPLE
(Temple having one pillar, i.e., one wall on each side)

TRIRATHA* TEMPLE
(Temple having three pillars, i.e., three walls on each side)

PANCHARATHA* TEMPLE
(Temple having five pillars, i.e., five walls on each side)

*EKA means one, TRI means three, PANCHA means five and in this context RATHA & PAGA mean pillar or pillar-like wall

FOOT NOTE: According to the number of Pagas or pillars, like 1, 3, 5, 7 or 9, used in a temple for its construction, the temple is classified in to one of the five classes as Ekaratha, Triratha, Pancharatha, Saptaratha or Nabaratha respectively. Out of these styles, the Nabaratha style of temples (having nine pillars on all sides) is not seen in Odisha. Except the Shari Deula in Bhubaneswar no other Saptaratha style temple was also built in Odisha. The Ekaratha temple is a rectangular temple or Chaurasa temple like the Vaitala temple in Bhubaneswar. The Triratha style temples are also very rarely seen here except the temple of Parshurameshwara located in Bhubaneswar. The Pancharatha style temples are very common in Odisha and are found almost everywhere.

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CHHIDA-UDA-GAJA-SINGHA

At Upper Barandi of the Main Temple

In local Odia language "Chhida" means standing, "Uda" means leaping or flying, "Singha" means lion and "Gaja" means elephant

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CHHIDA-UDA-GAJA-SINGHA
At Upper Barandi of the Main Temple

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CHHIDA-UDA-GAJA-SINGHA
At Upper Barandi of the Main Temple

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PARSHWA DEVTA ON LOWER BARANDI OF THE BADA OF MAIN TEMPLE
(SOUTH SIDE)

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Parshwa Devata **- (Auxiliary Deities)**

Parshwa Devata is installed invariably on all the temples of Odisha. Parvati on the north wall, Kartikeya on the west wall and Ganesha on the south wall are installed as *Parshwa Devata* in the temples of Shiva. In temples of Vishnu, the incarnations or *Avatars* of Vishnu, namely Vamana on the north, Nrusingha on the west and Baraha on the south are installed as *Parshwa Devata*. Likewise, in the temple of Konarka, on the lower *Barandi* of the *Raha Paga*, that is, on the *Shakara*, three beautiful images of Suryanarayana are installed as *Parshwa Devata* and they are still present there. Above each of these images exists a wide roof with a room like space below it.

The South Side Parshwa Devata- (Page 79)

Two staircases approximately 2 ½ feet wide built on the east and the west directions lead to the image of Suryanarayana installed on the south side. The roof above the image is 19 feet and 7 inches long in the north-south direction. The room below it is 11 feet and 5 inches wide in the north-south direction and 6 feet 9 ½ inches wide in the east-west direction. There is a divine image inside and a *Nabagraha* panel above the front doorway of this room. There once existed a *Dwarapala* (guard at the door) on each side of the doorway. Both the images are not present now. A *Mukhashala* also existed in front of this door which was 13 feet and 9 inches in height and 9 feet and 4 inches wide. The height of the existing portion of the wall of this *Mukhashala* is 11 feet and 9 inches. The carvings on this wall were similar in nature to that of the *Bada*. With all its sections included the temple of the *Parshwadevata* measures 36 feet in height and 36 feet in width. It seems that it was a *Pancharatha* temple with a *Pidha* type roof like the temples of *Parshwa Devata* of the temple in Puri. From the proportionate measurements, it seems that the wall of this temple was 15 feet in height and rose up to the head of the image of the Sun God. The roof over the image of the Sun God was extended up to this *Pidha* temple. The temple had doorways at all its three sides. The image of the Sun was reached through the door on the backside, as the staircases were connected to this doorway only. As per Bishan Swarup, there was a veranda of width 4 feet and 5 inches in front of the image of the Sun. The height at which this temple of *Parshwa Devata* exists is about 45 feet from the *Peetha* or plinth of the main temple.

The image of Suryanarayana is made of black granite and in standing pose. There is no crown on the head. The hair is hanging down and tied with a top knot like that of a saint. The deity wears a band on the forehead under the hairline, having decorative carvings on it. The sacred thread hanging from the shoulder of the image has also been very beautifully carved with fine motifs. The ornaments fixed to the nose and the neck are almost similar in thickness to that of the real life ornaments of gold and silver. The loin cloth dress having very fine and beautiful carvings on it is worn like the way it is worn in real life by the Brahmins. A belt is worn over the dress at the waist level with chains hanging from it down to the knee. The knees, the navel and the breasts are very naturally carved out. Those who blame the sculptors of Odisha for not being able to carve the muscles on the human body would change their opinion on seeing these carvings of the knees and the navel, etc. The image of the Sun God wears knee high boots with socks. A sword in its sheath is kept on the left side of the throne on the platform upon which stands the image of the Sun. Both the hands of the image of the Sun are now broken. There is a lotus in full bloom carved at the left side which was held by the Sun with his left hand. Likewise there was also a lotus in his right hand. Both the hands and the right side lotus are broken and missing.

The throne of the image is divided in to five *Pagas* or *Rathas* with a number of thin pillars carved at the end of each *Paga*. These pillars are narrow at the centre, become broad immediately after the centre and then taper off gradually to become narrow again at both of its ends. (Page 196) On the *Barandi* of the throne are seen dancing female figures holding musical instruments in their hands. Below them are placed seven beautifully sculpted horses. On the throne, at the foot of the image of the Sun, Aruna, the charioteer of the Sun is seated holding the reins of the horses with his left hand and the lash with his right hand. Aruna is sculpted without his feet.* The reins with carvings of fine precision look extremely beautiful. Two images of male soldiers, of height 3 feet each, stand on both sides of the Sun. The image on the right side holds a sword with his right hand and a shield with his left hand. The left side image holds a bow and arrow with the left hand. Between these two soldiers and the image of the Sun there are images of two bearded disciples of height 1 foot and 6 inches. At the side of these two disciples, on both sides of the Sun, are two saints of height 1 foot 5 inches. Above the head of the male soldiers, at both sides of the Sun, there are two female figures on each side. As per Bishan Swarup, out of these four female figures, two are the wives of the Sun, Chhaya and Sajna and the other two are his daughters Sabitri and

***FOOT NOTE**: The two sisters, Kadu and Binita, were blessed by saint Kashyap as they took great care of him. Being blessed Kadu delivered one thousand eggs and Binita two. Later, the *Nagas* (Cobras) were born out of the eggs delivered by Kadu. Binita, finding Kadu as the mother of one thousand children became envious and cracked one of her eggs prematurely. Out of this egg emerged Aruna as a bird with incomplete body and since then the image of Aruna is built as a bird without his feet.

– The *Mahabharata* – *Adiparba* – Chapter 16

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Gayatri. All these images, from the soldiers to the female figures, seem to have been built to be accommodated within one temple. Above them are built three layers of a *Pidha* type roof. From the top of this *Pidha*, at the backside, above the head of the image of the Sun, is built an extended projection like a canopy *(Torana)* acting as a hood. On this projection of the *Pidha* of the temple, near the left shoulder of the Sun, is placed the image of Brahma, and near the right shoulder Vishnu. Brahma is carved with four bearded faces and Vishnu with four arms having a conch *(Shankha)*, a discus *(Chakra)*, a mace *(Gada)* and a lotus *(Padma)* in his four hands. Both are seated on lotus pedestals. Above these two images are carved some dancing female figures with a Violin, a *Vina* (a string instrument like the Sitar), a *Pakhawaj* (a both sided Indian drum with one side having a small circular face emitting high pitch sound and the other side with a large circular face for emitting low pitched sound) and other musical instruments held with their hands. At the top, the celestial female beauties or fairies are seen flying with garlands in their hands. At the front of the canopy *(Torana)* is carved the face of *Rahu*. The face of *Rahu* is known as *Kirtimukha* in the terminology of Kalinga temple architecture. On both sides of *Kirtimukha* two flying *Gandharva* (celestial male musicians) are seen blowing conches.

The image of the Sun, the canopy and all other images associated with them are built out of one block of granite. This block is 12 feet and 6 inches high, 5 feet 11 inches wide and 2 feet and 6 inches thick. The height of the image of the Sun is 8 feet and 2 ½ inches from its foot to the top of its head.

<u>The West Side Parshwa Devata - (Page 82)</u>

The roof in front of the image of Suryanarayana in the west side is a little smaller in size than that of the south side. Its length is 17 feet and 3 inches. The length of the roof up to the end on the west side from the inside wall of the main temple, is 40 feet and 1 inch. Hence, the thickness of the wall of the main temple at the *Barandi* of the *Raha Paga* of *Bada* is 22 feet and 10 inches. Like the south side, two staircases, one from the south and the other from the north, are built up to the image of the Suryanarayana. The room existing below the roof is 11 feet and 1 inch in length and 6 feet 9 inches in width. The rest of it is similar to that of the temple of *Parshwa Devata* of the south side except that here only a common wall is found and not a wall like the one existing on the south side. Above the doorway of the room only a part of the *Nabagraha* panel is existing now and the rest is broken.

Likewise, in the west side also, on the *Raha Paga* of the *Barandi*, exists an image of Suryanarayana comparatively larger in size than the image of the south side. The image is very precisely and beautifully carved wearing fine linen and boots as is seen on the south side image. On the *Barandi* of the throne are carved seven horses. However, the image of *Aruna* is broken and not seen here. Unlike the image on the south side with hair tied with a top knot on the head, here the image wears a beautiful crown with finely carved ornamental decoration. All the images on the side of the Sun are placed as seen on the south side except that the image of Vishnu holding conch, discus, mace and lotus is not present here. In its place, there is an image without any attributes, though similar to the image of Vishnu of the south side in all other aspects. Without the attributes seen on the image it is difficult to properly identify it.

Manomohan Ganguli took the measurements of the images of *Parshwa Devata* and mentioned it his famous book *Orissa and Her Remains*. The dimensions of different parts of the body of the images of the Sun, installed as *Parshwa Devata* at the west and the south sides of the main temple are stated in the following pages as measured by Manomohan Ganguli.[1]:-

The Image of Suryanarayana on the West Side - (Page 82)

From	**To**	**Measurement**
Foot	Crown on the Head	9 feet and 6 inches
Foot	Knee	2 feet
Knee	Navel	2 feet and 7 inches
Knee	Thigh	2 feet
Navel	Chest	1 foot and 9½ inches
Shoulder	Elbow	1 foot and 6 inches
Boot	Front of Foot	1 foot and 1½ inches

1. Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains P.P. 450 – 451

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PARSHWA DEVTA ON LOWER BARANDI OF THE BADA OF MAIN TEMPLE (WEST SIDE)

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The Image of Suryanarayana on the South Side - (Page 79)

From	**To**	**Measurement**
Foot	Hair on the Head	8 feet and 2½ inches
Foot	Knee	2 feet
Knee	Navel	2 feet and 6½ inches
Knee	Thigh	1 foot and 10½ inches
Navel	Chest	1 foot and 1½ inches
Navel	Shoulder	1 foot and 7 ½ inches
Shoulder	Elbow	1 foot and 6 inches
Head	Foot	7 foot and 7½ inches

North Side - Parshwa Devata - (Page 84)

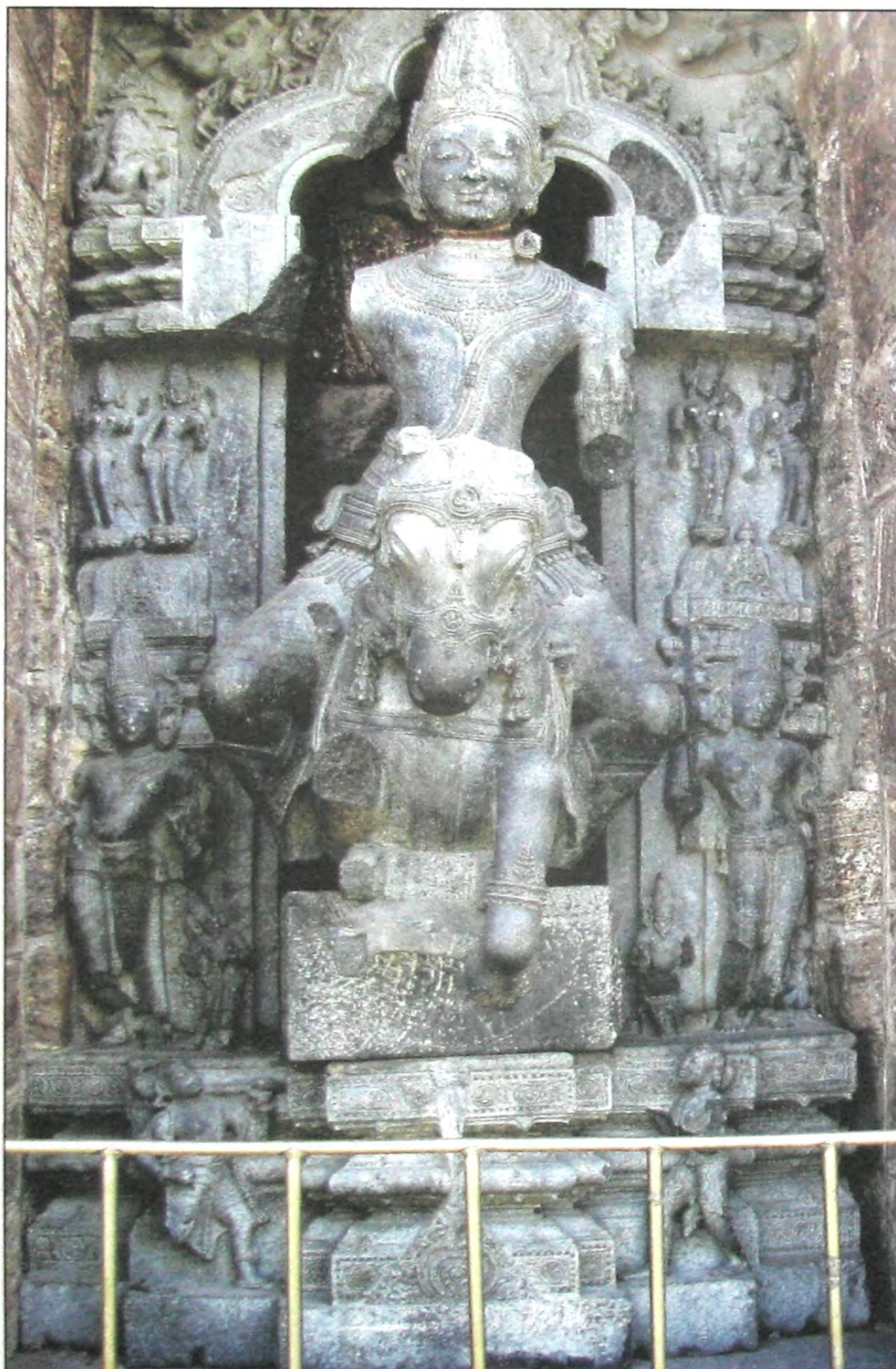
The roof existing at the Suryanarayana image on the north side is 12 feet in length. The room below it is 10 feet and 11 inches long and 6 feet and 9 inches wide. The *Nabagraha* panel is still there, above the doorway. The sacred bath water of the God of the main temple flows through this room. There is a beautiful *Magarmukha* (head of a crocodile) at the end of the channel through which the water was supposed to flow out.

Like the other sides, here also two staircases are built at the east and the west side up to the image of Suryanarayana. Above the roof in front of this image, there is no trace of the wall of the temple of *Parshwa Devata.* On the north side, the image of the Sun is quite different from that of the other sides. Unlike the images of the Sun at the other two sides, where they are standing on the throne, the image of the Sun on the north side is riding a rampart stallion in the attire of a warrior. The stallion looks very natural and real. The image of the Sun and also the stallion are carved out of black granite stone. The lash, the reins, the ornaments and the saddle of the stallion look fresh and real. The image and the stallion have been corroded at many places by the harsh effects of the weather. Here the seven horses and Aruna are not present. The right hand of the Sun and the two images on its left have broken hands. A new piece of granite has been fixed at bottom of the belly of the horse as an added support, otherwise the horse, along with the image of the Sun would have fallen down by now. The horse was originally supported by its two front legs which are now broken. In all other aspects, like the decoration and the auxiliary images placed on its side, this image of the Sun is similar to that of the other two.

There have been many opinions given by different writers regarding identification of these three images of the Sun. According to Dr. Bloch, the north side image is the rising Sun, the south side image is the Sun at noon and the west-side image is the setting Sun. Bishan Swarup, citing *Aditya Hrudaya* from the 139th chapter of *Bhabishya Purana* says that the Sun at noon is regarded as Shiva or Maheshwara, the setting Sun as Vishnu and the rising Sun as Brahma. Hence, had Dr. Bloch been right in his assumptions, the north side image of the Sun would have been Brahma and the south side image would have been Shiva. However, no such indications are there in the appearance of these images. As far as I have seen at Konarka, Shiva is presented in the form of Lingam or as human figures with snakes used as the sacred thread on these images. The sacred thread of the image of the Sun at the south side is decorated with ornamental carvings and not presented in the shape and appearance of a snake. The north side image is placed on a stallion in the attire of a warrior and it is not ever known for *Brahma* to have been presented in such a manner. Again, a four-faced Brahma is placed as a separate image on the left side of the image of the Sun. Dr. Bloch also says that, the image of the Sun at the north side is actually *Aruna.* However, Bishan Swarup does not agree to it. He says that, though Aruna is considered as one of the *Dwadasha Surya* (twelve forms of the Sun) in the epics, Aruna is described everywhere as the charioteer of the Sun. Hence, it is impossible to have attached equal status to Aruna with the Sun and install him as a *Parshwa Devata* along with the other two images of his master. Again, as said earlier, Aruna is devoid of his feet, but the feet of the image of the Sun at the north side are very well presented and hanging down from the horseback.

Therefore, Bishan Swarup has rightly assumed that, the image of the Sun at the south side is the image of Pushan. Pushan is another name of the Sun who wears hair hanging down and tied with a top knot on the head, as it is shown on this image. He considers the other two images as Vishnu and Haritashwa. As per *Rig Veda,* the Sun is described as Vishnu and Vishnu travels the universe with his three feet like, as Agni (Fire) under the ground, Vidyut (Lightning) on the earth and as the Sun in the sky. Hence, the west side image is *Vishnu* who is also considered as the Sun. The image on the north side is that of *Haritashwa* (another name of the Sun) or that of the

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PARSHWA DEVTA ON LOWER BARANDI OF THE BADA OF MAIN TEMPLE
(NORTH SIDE)

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Sun also. The Sun is described in certain scriptures as riding a horse named *Harit*. Therefore, the opinion given by Bishan Swarup seems to be more appropriate than that of Dr. Bloch.

Now, new slabs of stone have been placed like roofs over the images of *Parshwa Devata** except on that of the north side. Unless some kind of roof is built over the images on the north side, the weather will ruin the images soon with its corrosive effects.

Inside of the Main Temple -

The wall of the main temple exists today up to a height of only 30 feet from the floor inside the temple. There is a *Trikarma* or *Tinikama Bandhana* (with three sections) at a height of 4 feet and 10 inches from the floor running horizontally along the four walls (Page 86). There are no carvings on it. The *Bandhana* is projected from the walls by 6 inches. The width of this *Tinikama* or all three sections is 2 feet and 6 inches. At some places it was damaged and now has been repaired by inserting new pieces of stone. No carvings are present on the inside walls, rather the walls have been applied with two layers of plaster of ¼ inch thickness. Manomohan Ganguli, looking through the magnifying glass, had determined that the lower layer of plaster consisted of coarse grain sand while the upper layer contained fine grain sand. The lower layer looks red and the upper one looks shiny and beautiful even today.[1] Gradually the plaster is falling off the walls and already a considerable amount has fallen off. At the time of construction no lime paste mortar was applied to the joints of the stone slabs to make the bonding stronger and fill the gaps in between. Even then, the stone blocks were so snugly fitted that, at this broken state of the walls, almost no gap is found at their joints. There was only one entrance to the temple. For safety of the temple the damaged entrance towards the *Mukhashala* is now closed with stone blocks. Hence, it is impossible at this stage to describe the passage, the doorway and the doorframe existing at this point. However, as described by Bishan Swarup, the door between the *Mukhashala* and the main temple was 14 feet in height and 6 feet and 10 inches in width.[2] It was built of black granite and decorated with different types of ornamental work like those on the doorways of the *Mukhashala* (Chapter VI). The doorway was located at a distance of 24 feet and 6 inches from the inside western wall of the *Mukhashala*. The width of the place, where this door was fixed was 15 feet and 9 inches. Now, the doorway has been sealed by the government authorities with a wall as thick as its inside wall. A three layer *Bandhana* similar to the one existing on the inside wall has also been constructed on it. The floor inside the main temple is square in shape measuring 32 feet and 10 inches on each side. Black granite stone blocks 5½ inches thick have been laid on the floor inside the main temple. The gradual downward slope of the floor is maintained towards the north direction for the sacred bath water of the god to flow out through the opening in the north wall. As there is no other way to enter the damaged main temple now, a staircase has been built to climb up to the broken walls from the north-west direction and then down to the inside of the temple.

The Throne - (Page 86 to 90)

An elegant throne carved with very beautiful and fine ornamental work is seen inside the main temple. It is built on the floor of the temple at a distance of 3 feet from the west-side wall. The entire throne is built with five layers of black granite slabs, each layer being 1 foot thick. The deity of Suryanarayana was installed on this throne. Like the main temple, the throne is also built in *Pancharatha* style. At the lower level, the *Barandi*, indented to a depth of 1 inch, is carved with elephant motifs on its all three sides, that is, on the left, the right and on the front of it. On the front portion, at the middle *Paga*, there are four elephants including one sitting under a tree at the centre with its front legs raised. The elephant behind it is holding a tree with its trunk. The two *Pagas* on both the sides of it are carved with two elephants on each *Paga*. The last two *Pagas*, located one on each side, has three elephants carved on each of the *Pagas*, with a total of six elephants carved on them. All these elephants are carved directed towards the middle *Paga*. At all sides of the elephants, that is, above, below and on both the sides of them are carvings of bead string motifs. The *Jangha* consisting of *Tinikama* (three sections of decoration) like, *Pada, Kani* and *Basanta* starts from about 2 to 3 inches from the bottom of the lower platform. At the corner of each *Paga* emerge

***FOOT NOTE**: This image of the Sun is a *Saptatala* image. *Tala* means *Chakhanda* or a crude and common measurement which is equal to the straight-line length from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the middle finger of the hand when the fingers are spread to the maximum. The meaning of *Saptatala* image is that the height from the end of the chin to the top of its head is equal to one seventh of the total height of the image. Similarly *Ashtatala, Nabatala* and *Dashatala* images are also built where *Ashta* means eight, *Naba* means nine and *Dasha* means ten. As per the scripture *Shukraniti* created by saint *Shukracharya*, in *Kali Yuga* only *Saptatala* images are built and similarly *Dashatala* images in *Satya Yuga, Nabatala* images in *Tretaya Yuga* and *Ashtatala* images in *Dwapara Yuga* are built. The sculptors of Odisha have carved images everywhere maintaining the proportion of different parts of the body as per directions given in *Shukraniti* for *Kaliyuga*. - Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P. 210

1. Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P. 259

2. Bishan Swarup – Konark – P. 28

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THE THRONE (RATNA SINGHASANA) OF THE SUN GOD INSTALLED INSIDE THE MAIN TEMPLE

THE BANDHANA CONSISTING OF THREE LAYERS (TINIKAMA) RUNNING AROUND THE INSIDE WALLS OF THE MAIN TEMPLE IS SEEN BEHIND THE THRONE.

Installation of the throne inside the main temple proves that the temple was consecrated and the deity was being worshipped in the temple. It is further supported by the wear and tear marks found on the throne by Bishan Swarup.

It is said that the first worship was held in the morning of a Magha Shukla Saptami (on Chandrabhaga Festival day) that happened on a Sunday.
- Alicia Boner & Sadasiva Rath Sharma – New Light on the Sun Temple of Konarka – Introduction – Page xlv

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a few narrow *Pagas* running from *Pada* to the top of the throne. The *Pada* is decorated with carvings of creeper motifs and also with different animals placed at equal intervals in between the creepers. Bead string motifs are seen above and on the left and right sides of the creeper motifs. The top portion of the *Pada* is carved with *Marani* and inverted lotus petals. *Kani* is carved with flower motifs and *Basanta* with creeper motifs with deer, hare, elephants, frogs, etc. placed within it. Bead string motifs also run around *Basanta* and *Kani* as is seen in the *Pada*.

A plate of width 1 foot and 10 inches and extending from *Pada* to *Kani* with a scene carved on it is placed at the middle of the central *Paga* with a projection of 1 inch from it. Like the *Pada* of the throne, the *Pada* of this plate is also decorated with creeper motifs and above the *Pada* is an indented portion like *Barandi*. The plate is carved with a standing elephant facing the south. The mahout sits near it holding its trunk with his hand and feeding the elephant (Page 88). Bishan Swarup assumes this man (mahout) as Buddha. (It will be discussed in detail in Chapter XI). Then comes the *Barandi* of the throne. On the front portion of the *Barandi* the scene depicts the King in his full traditional attire worshipping the god with a sword clasped under his left arm (Page 88). Two of his ministers are standing behind and five others in front of him. A man is seen bending down to garland the king. The hand of the king is now broken. Dr. Bloch thinks the King to be Shamba himself. However, since the temple and the throne were built at the time of Narasingha Deba, I feel that the figure was that of Narasingha Deba himself and not of Shamba. Again, it does not seem appropriate for Shamba to offer prayers with a sword clasped under his arm. It is also not proper for him to be in the attire of a king just after being cured from the dreaded disease by his prayer and dedication to the Sun God. On the other hand, the builder of the temple, King Narasingha Deba was an extraordinary warrior. Therefore, it is appropriate to assume that the King is shown here in the attire befitting his character.

On all the *Barandis*, on the left of this middle *Paga*, dancing female figures are carved, whereas, on the right side dancing male figures worshipping the god with lamps, incense pots, offerings and different musical instruments like cymbals, drums, etc. are carved. A piece of stone from the corner *Paga* of the front side was missing and it has been recently replaced with a new one. This piece once contained ten female figures out of which only four exist now. Looking at these beautiful and charming male and female figures and the expressions on their faces, one's dedication and feelings for the God is doubled. Two pillars are placed at the end of all the *Barandis* of each *Paga*. These pillars are known as *Anta Bhanga Khamba* in local terms. They are narrow at the centre, become broad immediately after the centre and then taper off gradually to become narrow again at both of its ends (Page 228). At the two corners of the *Barandi* on the front of the throne exist two lions standing on their hind legs with their faces turned backward. On both sides of the corner, two elephants are lying under the hind thighs of the lions. Just at the corner, the ferocious face of the lion is turned backwards extending up to the end of its tail. At each of the two corners closer to the hind side of the throne an *Olata Singha* (lion looking backward) is seen pounced on an elephant (Page 90).

On the *Barandi*, there are three rows of carvings. The first row consists of creeper and animal motifs like those on the lower *Basanta*. The portion above it is without any carvings like *Kani*. At the top, there are creeper motifs similar to that of *Pada* and above it exist the carvings of inverted lotus petals on the *Marani*. The gap between the second and the third carvings is 3 inches. This gap is decorated with a number of pillars like the *Anta Bhanga Khamba*. The left and the right side of the throne carry two scenes like the scene of the elephant with mahout at the front. However, the themes of these scenes are not yet understood. It carries motifs like the marks found on the coat of arms. Above it, there are two birds sitting on a tree with their necks twisted backwards (Page 90). The backside of the throne is plain and simple, carrying no ornamental work.

The throne is 11 feet in length, 7 feet and 6 inches in width and 4 feet and 8 inches in height. At the right side bottom of the throne there once existed a staircase of black granite leading to the top of it. Now, out of all the steps only three of them from the bottom are surviving. On the throne, a platform is built over which the deity of *Suryanarayana* was once installed and worshipped. This is also carved in *Pancharatha* style like that of the throne itself and is without any ornamental work. At the top surface of it, there is a channel for the sacred bath water of the god to flow out. Since the Sun God was installed on the throne and being worshipped here for quite some time this spot looks soiled with some marks created on it due to wear and tear. This platform is made of a single block of granite stone. Behind this platform is a circular structure of sandstone of 5 feet high, 3 feet and 5 inches wide and 1 foot thick for Suryanarayana to lean back while standing on the throne. At the time Bishan Swarup saw it, a piece of stone had fallen off from the top of this structure. Now only a single piece of stone exists there. To keep the stone pieces firm and in place on the throne, clamps made of brass, not of iron, were used. Now,

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THE KING FEEDING THE ELEPHANT

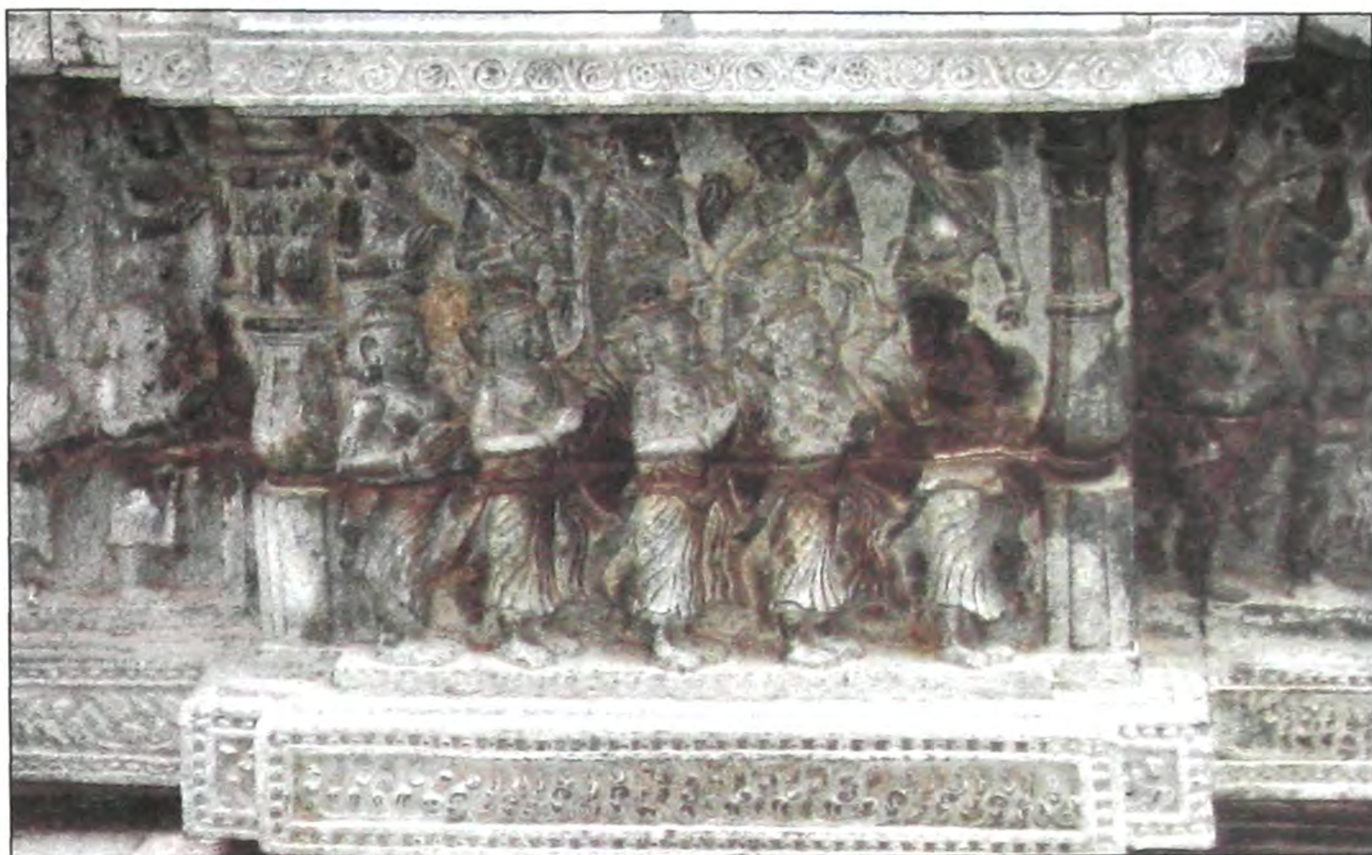
Bishan Swarup describes it as Buddha feeding the elephant whereas Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra states it otherwise.



THE KING WITH HIS MINISTERS CARVED ON THE BARANDI OF THE THRONE

Sadashiva Samantaray Mahapatra (Shibei Santara) was the creator and designer or the Chief Architect (Sutradhara) of all the temples. Gadadhara Mahapatra was the Chief Executive Architect and Gangadhara Mahapatra was the Head of the Sculptors. Whereas Narayana Mahapatra was the Master Sculptor and Vishwanath Mahapatra was the Specialist in carving the Royal Scenes and Portraits. – Alicia Boner & Sadasiva Rath Sharma – New Light on the Sun Temple of Konarka – Introduction – Page xliii

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THE KING
- on the Barandi of the throne



DEVOTEES
- on the Barandi of the throne

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CLOSE-UP OF THE *OLATA SINGHA*
(BACKWARD LOOKING LION)



CLOSE-UP OF A CARVING ON THE THRONE
WITH TWO TWISTED NECK PARROTS AT THE TOP



SOUTH-SIDE OF THE THRONE (RATNA SINGHASANA WITH OLATA SINGHA AT BOTH ENDS OF THE BARANDI)

The throne was once dismantled and then reassembled during the rescue process. Usually the throne is laid with many different precious stones and metals placed within it for which it is also known as Ratna Singhashana (Ratna means precious stones and Singhashana means the throne). There is no information about whether the precious articles were found during the time it was dismantled and then reassembled and if found where are they now.

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these clamps are missing. It is said that the throne was once dismantled and then reassembled during the rescue process. Usually the throne is laid with many different precious stones and metals placed within it for which it is also known as *Ratna Singhashana* (*Ratna* means precious stones and *Singhashana* means the throne).

Height of the Main Temple -

A major part of the *Bada* of the temple has already collapsed. The *Rekha* portion of the temple was built over the *Bada*. Atop the *Rekha* were placed the *Beki*, the head and other top portions of the temple. At the *Beki*, were placed an image of Garuda (the bird-headed and winged carrier of Vishnu) on the *Raha Paga* and a lion on the *Konaka Paga*. The *Amalaka Shila*, *Khapuri* (also known as *Tripatadhara* or *Karpuri*), *Kalashapada*, *Kalasha* and finally the *Dhwaja Padma* were placed over the *Beki*. It is now not so easy to determine the dimensions of all these individual parts of the temple as they do not exist now. However, all the temples are built in accordance with certain fixed rules dictating the dimensions of its various sections bearing certain fixed proportions to the total size of the temple. Hence, taking this fact in to account and also the information given in *Madala Panji*, the height of the main temple at Konarka can be determined to a fair degree of accuracy.

It is mentioned in *Madala Panji* that King Narasingha Deba -II had once measured the abandoned temple of Konarka by one of his responsible subordinates (*Mahapatra*).[1] The measurement was done in terms of *Kathhi* (an ancient unit used for measurement of length). One *Kathhi* was equivalent to the width of 28 *Anguli* (*Anguli* is the width of one finger) of the King. An approximate conversion of 1 *Kathhi* to modern unit of measurement of length would be 1 foot and 9 inches.*

Measurement of Different Sections of the Temple:

Section	*Kathhi*	*Anguli*	= Foot - Inch
Magnetic Iron Block	12	14	= 21 - 10 ½
*Kalasha***	2	8	= 4 - 0
Dhwaja Padma	1	0	= 1 - 9
Khapuri	3	6	= 5 - 7 ½
Egara Patika? (Eleven bands)	1	14	= 2 - 7 ½
From *Amalak Shila* to the bottom of *Garuda*	12	0	= 21 - 0
From the bottom of *Garuda* to the Lotus Plinth	87	14	= 153 - 1 ½
The Height of the Temple	**120**	**0**	**= 210 - 0**

Hence the height of the main temple from the *Padma Prusthha* (Lotus Plinth) to the top was 120 *Kathhis* or 210 feet.

In the previous chapter it is said that the total height of the lower platform, the lower plinth and the lotus plinth from the ground is 16 feet and 6 inches. Hence the total height of the main temple from the ground level is (210 feet + 16 feet and 6 inches) is equal to 226 feet and 6 inches.

* **FOOT NOTE:** For this calculation the unit of one Cubit, which is equal to the distance between the tip of the middle finger to the end of the elbow of the right hand of a grown up man, is taken as equivalent to 18 inches. However, it cannot be said that the length of the King's hand was exactly 18 inches. Even for a common man this length is sometimes more than 18 inches. Hence, the height of the temple may be a little more than the figure calculated by this procedure.

****FOOT NOTE:** It is stated in the report of the Research Wing of the Department of Archaeology published in the year 1903 – 04 that the height of the *Kalasha* of the main temple was 25 feet. It proves that the measurements stated in *Madala Panji* regarding the temple are also correct.

1. Bishan Swarup – Konark – P. 8

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Manomohan Ganguli, after studying and analysing a number of such existing temples has determined the specific proportions with which the different sections of a *Rekha* type temple are built.[1] The height of the *Bada*, in case of a *Rekha* type temple is 13/3 times of the height of the *Jangha*. As stated earlier, the height of the *Jangha* of the main temple is 13 feet and 6 inches. Hence the height of *Bada* should be {(13 feet and 6 inches) x (13/3) =} 58 feet and 6 inches. Again, as per the rule, the height of the *Rekha* section of a temple is twice that of the *Bada* or in other words the total height of *Rekha* and *Bada* is thrice the height of the *Bada*. Hence from the *Padma Prusthha* (Lotus Plinth) up to the *Beki* (neck) the height of the temple is (58 feet and 6 inches x 3 =) 175 feet and 6 inches. According to the measurement taken by King Narasingha Deba-II, the total height of the *Amalaka Shila* and the *Kalasha*, etc. is 20½ *Kathhi* or 36 feet. Hence, the height of the temple from the *Padma Prusthha* (Lotus Plinth) up to the top is (175 feet and 6 inches + 36 feet =) 211 feet and 6 inches and the height from the ground level is (211 feet and 6 inches +16 feet and 6 inches =) 228 feet. This calculation made by Ganguli is also an approximation. Hence, we can take the total height of the main temple of Konarka as 230 feet for all practical purposes.

The main temple of Konarka was much bigger than the main temple of Bhubaneswar or that of the *Jagannatha* temple in Puri.* Manomohan Ganguli also states that the temple of Konarka was the highest and the most beautiful temple in the world. For the misfortune of the Odias, such a huge temple fell down so early in its life causing immense and perennial pain in the hearts of its spectators.

***FOOT NOTE**: From the level of Bada Danda (Grand Road in front of Jagannatha temple in Puri) the height of the temple of *Jagannatha* is 214 feet and 8 inches. The actual height of the temple can be calculated by deducting the height of the *Baishi Pahacha* (the Twenty-two Steps) one has to climb to reach the inner compound of the temple to enter the sanctuary) from this height. - Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P. 417

The height of the main temple of Bhubaneswar from the ground near the school is 127 feet and 1 inch. - Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P. 351

1. Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P. 132 – 133



A ROW OF ELEPHANTS CARVED AT THE BOTTOM OF THE RATNA SINGHASANA (THE THRONE)

The elephant motifs in different forms and sizes have been extensively used in decoration of the temples at Konarka.

NOTE: The Sun Temple was constructed after filling up the gorge of the River Chitrotpala and the river continued to flow at the eastside of the temple construction site to meet the sea which was then much closer to it. This part of the river was also known as Chandrabhaga. Since the Vishnu temple now in ruins inside the temple campus belongs to the 10th century and Ramachandi existed there earlier to the present Sun Temple these two indicate the western boundary of the river gorge. The gorge must have been filled up from this side to the required extent in the east direction and the river continued to flow through the unfilled portion in the eastside to meet the sea.

During construction, considering the height of the temple and the size of the stone blocks used for the purpose, quite a large area around the temple site must have been occupied for direct construction activities and for pilling of materials. King Langula Narasingha Deb engaged 1, 200 artisans for construction of the temple. They worked from sunrise to sunset every day for 14 years to complete the temple complex. At least 15 times of this figure must have been employed as skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled labourers to assist the artisans in direct and indirect ways in the fields of ship and raft building and repair activity, in bullock cart and ramp building, in iron beams, hooks and tools manufacturing activities, as care-takers of the herds of a number of elephants, many more number of horses, huge number of bullocks and cows and arranging fodder and food for them, supplying grocery, grains and vegetables, preparing food for such a huge number of people, taking care of the guests and visitors and providing entertainment and security to all.

To the west of the temple site (Ref: The Sketch given in Page 29 indicates these locations), at Khalakothha ships and rafts used for transportation of huge stone blocks and iron beams were being built and repaired. To its north, near Bedpur, Sibei Santara's residence was located. The different branch heads and the artisans with the labour force were living nearby, in the area close to the water sources located between the temple site, Sibei Santara's residence, the iron and the ship building factory. Moving down in south direction comes Dahaupara at Junei which was a major trading centre and market place. A number of elephants, more number of horses and many more number of bullocks must have been engaged in construction and transportation activities. Probably they were housed in the two villages Godhanpada (literally means a place for the cows and bullocks) and Guhalapur (literally means a village where the sheds for domestic animals exist) located at the northeast side of the temple site and close to the Golara forest which provided fodder and food for the animals.

Hence, it seems the entire area shown in the sketch given in page 29 was overflowing with activities during construction of the Sun Temple. It continued for 14 years and probably beyond that with the people engaged in activities for taking care of the large number of visitors and the religious tourists rushing to Konarka to have a look of this marvellous structure and paying homage to the Sun God.

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MUKHASHALA
Early morning view of the eastern front

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A PORTION OF THE BADA OF MUKHASHALA (LEFT FRONT PART)

PIDHA OF MUKHASHALA

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CHAPTER VI

MUKHASHALA
(THE PORCH)

The main temple and the *Mukhashala* of Konarka are built on a common plinth known as *Padma Prusthha* (Lotus Plinth). The *Bada* of the *Mukhashala* is constructed on this plinth. The *Mukhashala* is of *Pancharatha* style like the main temple. However, unlike the *Rekha* type main temple, it has a *Pidha* roof. Out of all the temples in Konarka, only the *Mukhashala*, even after sustaining damages at different places, is surviving in its almost original form till date. The *Mukhashala* is also known by other names like *Jagamohan* and *Mohana*. It is also known as *Antarala* as per *Kashyapa*.

Bada - (Page 94)

Pidha roof of the *Mukhashala* is built over the *Bada* which is divided in to five sections. The names and the height of all the sections are stated below -

<u>Sections</u>	<u>Height of Each Section</u>
Tala (lower) *Jangha*	10 feet and 11 inches
Shakara or *Tala Barandi* (lower *Barandi*)	8 feet and 10 inches
Bandhana	2 feet and 7 ½ inches
Shikara or *Upara* (upper) *Barandi*	8 feet and 1 ½ inches
Upara (upper) *Jangha*	9 feet and 4 inches
Total Height of the *Bada* from *Padma Prusthha* (Plinth)	39 feet and 10 inches

Jangha is also divided in to five sections like *Pada, Kumbha, Kani, Pata* and *Basanta*. *Pada* is carved with creeper motifs and above the creepers, on the *Marani*, there are carvings of inverted lotus petals. However, there are no carvings on the *Kumbha* except a *Dori* at the middle. The carvings on *Kani, Pata* and *Basanta* are similar to those on the main temple.

The carvings on the *Jangha* run around the *Mukhashala* in parallel with the *Peetha* (plinth). To differentiate between the decoration on the *Jangha* of *Konaka Paga* and that of *Anartha Paga* and to present variety, in between the two, a number of small vertical *Pidha* type temples have been carved at regular intervals. On both sides of each small *Pidha* temple, two multifaceted pillars have been constructed. The pillars closer to each temple are carved with images of *Nagakanya*, i.e., female figures with upper half of the body as human and the lower half as a snake with the snake part wrapped around the pillars. These beautiful figures are carved with very fine details. The next pillar on both sides is decorated with creeper motifs. These pillars are shaped as *Anta Bhanga Khamba*. The top portion of these pillars looks very beautiful.

Shakara or *Tala Barandi* is located above the *Jangha*. At certain places on this *Barandi, Olata-Gaja-Singha* (Page 96 & 97) images are carved, that is, an elephant lying on the ground pounced upon by a lion standing on it with its two hind legs and the front legs raised. Some imaginary animals are also seen at certain places on this *Barandi*. Probably these animals prompted Abul Fazl to state that, such animals existed only in the imaginary world of man and not in reality. These animals have trunks like that of the elephants and paws like those of the lions, and each of these lions is seen engaged in killing a demon (Page 98 to 101). Like the pillars on the *Jangha*, the pillars existing on both sides of these animals are also very well decorated.

The *Bandhana* located above the *Shakara* is decorated like the *Bandhana* of the main temple with *Pancha Kama* (Five Sections of decoration) and all the sections are decorated with carvings exactly like those on the respective sections of the *Bandhana* of the main temple. The *Bandhana* runs around the temple without break except at the doorways. It helps to differentiate the horizontal decorative carvings between the upper and the lower *Barandi*.

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OLATA GAJA-SINGHA
At the lower Barandi of Mukhashala

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OLATA GAJA-SINGHA
At the lower Barandi of Mukhashala

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AN IMAGINARY ANIMAL OF LION CATEGORY
At the lower Barandi of Mukhashala
It is an imaginary animal as mentioned by Abul Fazl and Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra. It is one of the many imaginary variants of the lion-elephant combination with predominance of the lion's body carved on the temple and later named by the historians as Gaja-Vidala. In local language Gaja means elephant and Vidal means a cat.

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AN IMAGINARY ANIMAL OF LION CATEGORY

At the lower Barandi of Mukhashala

An imaginary animal as mentioned by Abul Fazl and Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra. It is one of the many imaginary variants of the lion-elephant combination with predominance of the lion's body carved on the temple and later named by historians as Gaja-Vidala.

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AN IMAGINARY ANIMAL OF LION CATEGORY

At the lower Barandi of Mukhashala

Like these Vidals, Nagas and Nagakanyas present on Hindu temples,hybrid images, though in different forms, are also found on thewalls of the monuments of every ancient culture of the world like that of the Mayans and the Egyptians. These images are considered as celestial beings or gods were once present in this world for doing good to the mankind.

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A DIFFERENT FORM OF VIDALA

At the lower Barandi of Mukhashala

An imaginary animal as mentioned by Abul Fazl and Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra. It is another form of Vidala with the combination of the lower part of a lion's body and the upper part that of a human figure. Here the Vidala is seen killing a demon. This particular type of sculpture is not seen anywhere in India except at Konarka.

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EROTIC COUPLES ON UPPER BARANDI OF THE BADA OF MUKHASHALA

Shikar or *Upara Barandi* is located above the *Bandhana*. This Barandi is divided into many compartments with a number of decorated pillars. Many obscene life size images of couples comprising of male and female are carved on each of these compartments (Page 102&217 to 219). These images look so natural, lifelike and entertaining that they are considered as objects of pride for the sculptors of any age in any country of the world. In spite of the obscenity in these images, looking at them, one gets charmed by their forms, figures, beauty and serenity, rather than getting attracted to the obscenity they so vividly project. Different critics give different opinions regarding the justification for placing such obscene images on temples considered as the sacred abode of the gods and the goddesses. This topic will be discussed in detail in Chapter XII.

It is interesting to find that, at the west side of the *Mukhashala*, there is an obscene image of a couple with the male figure wearing a turban looking similar to those worn by the national level workers of *Utkal Sammilani*.

The topmost part of the *Bada* is *Jangha*. Usually, it consists of *Saptakarma* or *Satakama* (seven sections of decoration) namely, *Pata, Pheni, Kani, Basanta* again *Kani, Pheni* and *Basanta*. However, in the case of Konarka, like the main temple, the *Mukhashala* is also decorated with *Dasa Kama* (ten decorative sections). Here, the *Pheni, Kani* and *Basanta* are repeated after *Sata Kama*. On the upper *Jangha* there are no vertical small *Pidha* temples or pillars as is seen on the lower *Jangha*. Each of these layers, as usual, is decorated with creeper and lotus motifs. This *Jangha* makes the temple look very beautiful. A very essential and beautiful gap is maintained between the decoration on the *Bada* and that on the *Pidha* above it. Otherwise the *Pidha* would not have appeared as an independent section from the *Bada*. Specially, the extremely amazing effect created on the *Bada* of the *Mukhashala* of Konarka temple due to the play of light and shade and the rule of symmetry and variety applied to its sculptural architecture shows the deep experience of its creators in the subject (Chapter XII).

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COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA


COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

FEMALE MUSICIANS ON THE PIDHA PLAYING A LONG PIPE AND A KHOLA (DRUM)

Musicians, specially the players of musical instruments carved on the walls of Konarka Temple are mostly female. Probably music and dance was forte of mostly the females.


COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA


COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

LARGER THAN LIFE SIZE FEMALE MUSICIANS ON THE PIDHA PLAYING CYMBALS

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COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

IMAGES OF VAIRAV (SHIVA) ON FIRST LEVEL OF THE PIDHA ABOVE THE DOORWAY OF MUKHASHALA



COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA



COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

FEMALE MUSICIANS ON THE PIDHA OF MUKHASHALA, ONE PLAYING A LONG PIPE THE OTHER A DRUM

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The sculptural objects on the *Bada* have been very skilfully and intelligently placed projected from the wall at some places and indented at other places. The *Bada* also has been divided in to many different compartments by placing many pillars and small temple like structures on it. The sculptors are worthy of praise for the fact that, the *Bada*, in spite of being divided in to so many small compartments, its square shape is maintained as required, and it still exists undamaged. This is another speciality of the temple of Konarka.

Pidha- (Page 94)
The *Mukhashala* having a *Pidha* type roof is classified as a *Pidha* temple. The first *Pidha* or the first step of the roof is usually projected beyond the *Bada* up to a length equal to half of the height of the upper *Jangha*. Here, the *Pidha* is projected up to about 4 feet from the *Bada*. Unlike the temple at Puri, where the *Pidha* rests on iron pillars and beams, there are no such supports provided to the *Pidha* of the *Mukhashala* at Konarka. It rests on the *Bada* and remains stable there only by the downward force exerted on the *Bada* by the weight of the *Pidha*. Like the *Pagas* divide the *Bada* into different sections, divisions are also created in the *Pidha* by the *Pagas*. The *Pidha* consists of three levels. The first level has six layers, the second level has also six layers and the third level has five layers. Between the first and the second level there is a gap of 7 feet and 4 inches and between second and the third level the gap is 5 feet and 7 inches. Within these gaps are placed life size images of full figure females playing and dancing with different musical instruments like drums and clarinet and some other artefacts(Page 103 & 104). In this gap of the *Pidha*, just above the three doorways, are placed three images of *Shiva* having four faces with three eyes carved on each face (Page 104). Since the hair tied with a top knot of *Shiva* is considered as his fifth face, another face of Shiva has not been carved here. The images are adorned with snakes as sacred thread and a *Dambaru* (a small stringed double-sided drum) held by one hand.

The front edge of each level of *Pidha* is 1 foot and 3 inched in thickness. The second level of *Pidha* is projected by 3 feet and 6 inches and the third level by 2 feet and 7 inches from the wall.

The front edge of the first and the second level of *Pidha* are carved with images of elephants and horses and with scenes of war and hunting. The *Pidha* at the third level does not have any such carvings at its front edge. As this portion of the temple is located at a great height, had there been any carvings on this level, it would not have been visible from the base of the temple. The writer of Puri Gazetteer states,[1] "If all the *Pidhas* were stretched and placed side by side it would be 3, 000 feet in length. The number of images carved on it, would be at least, double of this number or 6, 000 images. The high level of the standard of Indian sculpture has been projected through these images.

The height of the *Pidha* from the *Bada* is stated below: -

Sections	Height of Each Section
Height of 1st Level of *Pidha*	15 feet and 8 inches
Height of 2nd Level of *Pidha*	10 feet and 6 inches
Height of 3rd Level of *Pidha*	7 feet and 6 inches
Gap between First & Second *Pidha*	7 feet and 4 inches
Gap between Second & Third *Pidha*	5 feet and 7 inches
Total Height of *Pidha* from *Bada* to *Beki* (Neck)	46 feet and 7 inches

Like the other *Pidha* type temples, *Sri Beki, Sri Khapuri, Dori, Amalaka Beki, Amalakashila, Amalaka Khapuri, Kalasha Pada, Kalasha* and *Dhwaja* were placed one above the other, on the *Pidha*. Even now, except the *Kalasha* and the *Dhwaja* all other parts still exist on the *Mukhashala*.

On the *Sri Beki* (neck) are placed eight lion statues. The *Sri Beki* and the components placed above it seem to have rested on these lions. The *Pidha* below the *Beki* is square and *Sri Beki*, etc. are round in shape. Hence, it is clearly understood that, to make adjustments between these two different shapes the lions were required to be placed there. There are no carvings on *Sri*. *Sri Khapuri* is carved with lotus petals and it appears like a large bell. The height of the *Beki* with *Khapuri* is 17 feet and 8 inches. Above it is placed the *Dori* and the *Amalaka Beki*. On the *Amalaka Beki* a number of male figures are seen in sitting pose facing outward with both of their palms of the hands placed rigidly on the floor. The *Amalaka Shila* rests on their head and back. It seems as if they have kept

1. L.S.S. O' Malley – Bengal District Gazetteer- Puri – P. 274

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the *Amalaka Shila* in place by taking its load on their head and back and it will slip off if they remove their hands from the floor. *Amalaka Shila* has a ridged shape like *Amla*. For this reason it is named *Amalaka*. The height of *Amalaka Shila* is 7 feet and 10 inches. There is no decoration or carving on the *Amalaka Khapuri*. The diameter of this *Khapuri* is 16 feet and 10 inches. *Kalasha* and *Dhwaja* are not seen now and they were not there even at the time Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra visited Konarka. However, Bishan Swarup states that he had a chance to see the iron bar that was once used to join the *Amalaka Shila* with the *Kalasha*.[1]*

MASTAKA (HEAD) OF MUKHASHALA

Height of the *Mukhashala* –
According to *Madala Panji*, the height of *Mukhashala* is 73 *Kathhi* or 127 feet and 9 inches. Manomohan Ganguli, with an instrument, measured its height to be 129 feet and 8 inches.[2]

The heights of the *Kalasha* and the *Dhwaja Padma* are not added to the above measurement. The height of *Kalasha* and the *Dhwaja Padma* may be assumed to be 20 feet. It is estimated from the picture of Konarka temple[3] in its full-fledged and original condition given in Bishan Swarup's book that the combined height of *Kalasha* and *Dhwaja* was around 24 feet. Therefore, even if the height of *Kalasha* and *Dhwaja* is taken to be only 15 feet, the total height of the *Mukhashala* comes to 145 feet. Hence, the *Mukhashala* of Konarka was taller by 15 to 20 feet than the main temple of Bhubaneswar. **

The Doorways – (Pages 107 to 112)
There are four doorways at four sides of the *Mukhashala*. The west side doorway served as the entrance door for the main temple. The door frames of all the doorways are carved out of black granite and decorated with different types of beautiful and ornamental carvings. One gets really enchanted by looking at the beauty and the build of the doorways. It seems as if all the beauty of Konarka temple has been aggregated to be exhibited on these door frames. Presumably, the sculptors tried their best to give a shape to all their beautiful dreams on them. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra has described the door frames extensively in his book "Antiquities of Orissa" excerpts of which are describes here.[4]–

"The Doorframe is of chlorite, and of a rectangular shape. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx Its front is one mass of carving of the richest and the most sumptuous description to be seen anywhere in India.

1. Bishan Swarup – Konark – P. 19
2. Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P.P. 460-61
3. Bishan Swarup – Konark – Plate No. 1

* **FOOT NOTE**: From the measurements written in *Madala Panji*, it seems that, the *Kalasha* of the *Mukhashala* was also not present like that of the main temple at the time of taking measurements. Hence it seems that both the *Kalashas* were broken off the temples at the same time.

****FOOT NOTE**: The height of the main temple at Bhubaneswar is 127 feet and 1 inch, or for all practical purposes it can be safely assumed to be 130 feet high.

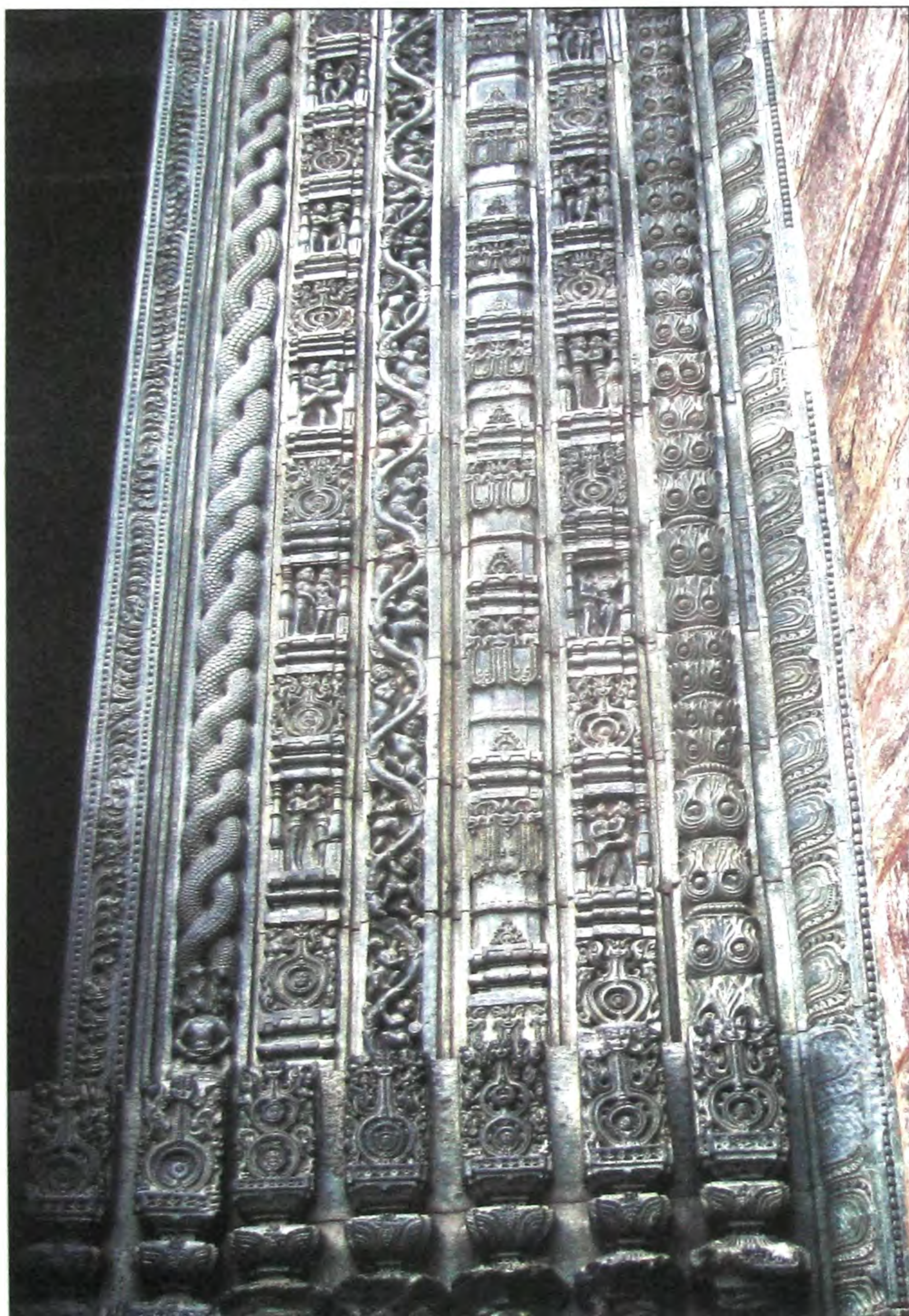
4. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra – Antiquities of Orissa – Vol – II – P. 154

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THE EXQUISITIVELY CARVED EAST SIDE GRANITE DOORWAY
-THE MAIN ENTRANCE TO THE TEMPLE THROUGH MUKHASHALA-
Unfortunately the wall holding the doorway has been rebuilt with plain stone blocks during its restoration

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DECORATION ON THE RIGHT VERTICAL ARM OF THE DOORWAY

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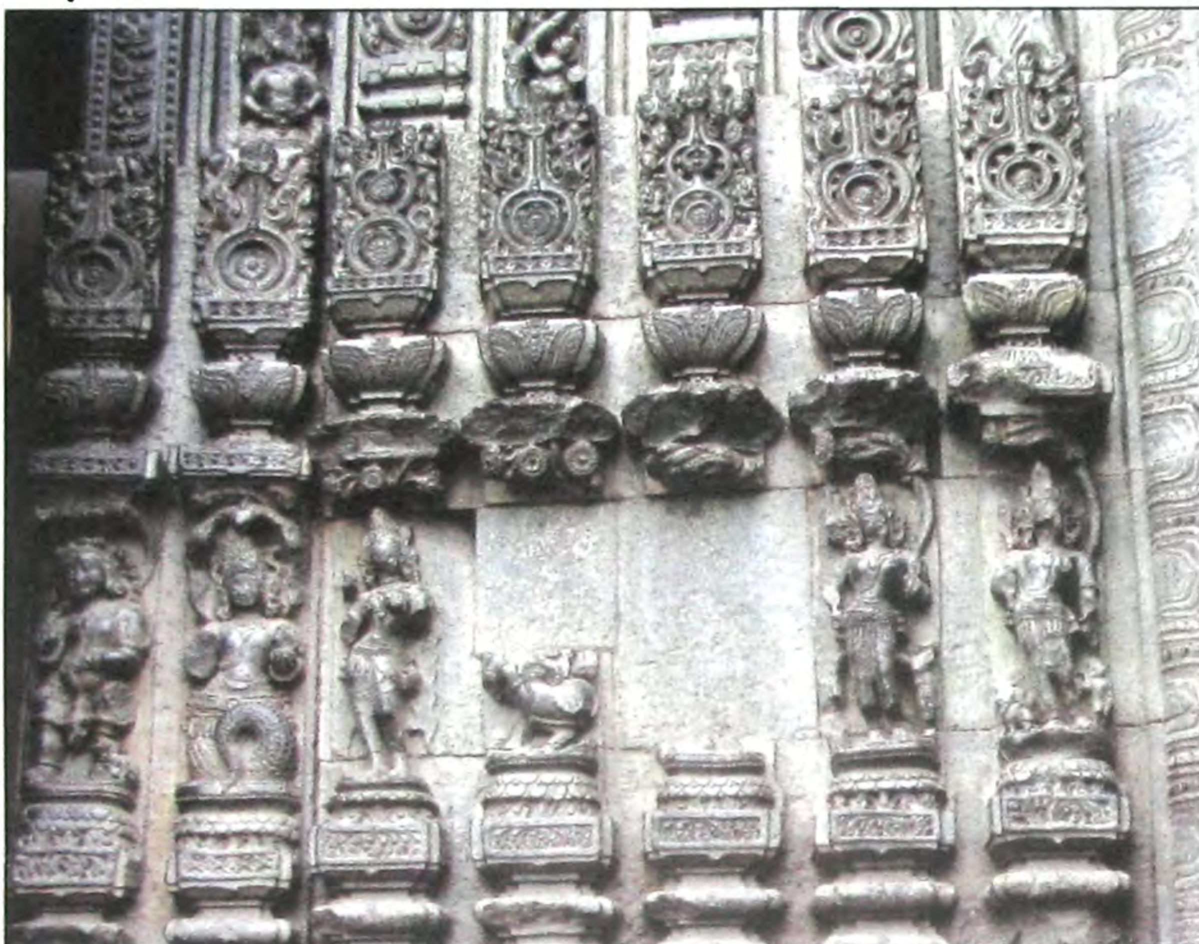
The pattern is conventional, being met with not only in different parts of Orissa, notably in the porch of the Great Tower of Bhuvanesvara, but also in Ajanta Cave No.1 and elsewhere; but its finish is most exquisite. The design includes seven distinct bands enclosed in a frame having its edge moulded in the form of a cymarecta, and set off with a series of lotus petals edged with beaded ornaments. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx The bands are all set in the same level; they rise from the top of the alto-relievo human figures standing in different attitudes, and terminate at the corner of the lintel, the transverse portions on the lintel being in some of the bands differently ornamented. The innermost band has a floral design. The next is formed of two twining serpents which terminate at the top in a female bust. The chaste design and exquisite finish of this scroll cannot be surpassed by any carving of the medieval times. The third is formed of panels filled in alternatively, the coat-of- arms design xxxxxxxxxxxx and human couples in distinguishly obscene attitudes. In the transverse portion of this band the coat-of-arms design is omitted and, the human couples are replaced by single squatting figures, either singing or playing on musical instruments. The fourth is a trailing vine in the loops of which cherubs are at play. In the transverse portion of this band the vine is dropped, and the cherubs are replaced by human figures in a flying attitude, each carrying a female seated on his out-stretched thigh. The fifth is formed of a series of miniature pilasters set one over the other, the transverse portion being filled in with musicians playing mostly on the large drum called *Khola*. The sixth is a repetition of the third in every detail; and the seventh is formed of a string of cucurbitaceous flowers. In the middle of the transverse portion of each band there is a panel flanked with pilasters and filled in with basso-relievo. The subject of the lowest panel is the sun as shown in the Nabagraha frieze, holding a full-blown lotus in each hand, and attended by two servants waving *chauris*. In the next panel the central figure is a *raja* explaining something to a minister standing with folded hands on one side, while a servant on the other side waves a *chauri*. This is repeated in the third, fourth, fifth and sixth panels. In the top most panel the *raja* appears in a niche surmounted by a trifoiled arch and having the head of an elephant on each side."

At the bottom of the doorway is located a portion of Jangha consisting of sections like *Pada, Kani, Basanta* and again *Kani. Basanta* is decorated with creeper motifs. Above it, the upper *Barandi* is constructed as *Pidha* temples. On the *Khura Prusthha* of it there are carvings of lotus flower. Full figure standing images of celestial female beauties and snake-women *(Nagakanya)*, etc. in beautiful poses are placed on the Bada of this temple. The roof and the *Mastaka* (Head) of the temple above are decorated with many types of creeper motifs. On both sides of the doorframe, the *Jangha* and the *Barandi* are divided in to seven parts looking like seven pillars having 1½ inch gap between the adjacent pillars. The seven layers of carvings on the top part the doorframe starts from the *Mastaka* (Head) of the *Barandi* and extends up to both the corners. The carvings on the top portion of the doorframe are different at places than those present at the sides. On the *Mastaka* (Head) of the above-mentioned *Barandi*, carved like a small *Pidha* temple, is a beautifully carved object looking like the coat of arms. This serves as the *Pada* of each division of the *Barandi*. The first layer or the layer closest to the door opening is decorated with honeycomb scroll. The next layer has two female figures on both sides. The female figures at the top of the doorframe are sleeping in north-south direction with their heads pointing towards each other. From the top, a twisted pair of seven headed snakes with their hoods raised is placed above each of these sleeping beauties. The carvings of the creeper motif and that of the snakeskin are so beautiful that they have no comparison in any other sculpture of the middle age. The third layer is divided in to a number of compartments or *Barandi*. In the first compartment there is an obscene image of a couple and both the side compartments of this image are carved with pillars known in local terms as *Anta Bhanga Khamba*. The next compartment has carvings like the coat of arms, and the next again has an obscene image and next to it the coat of arms design is repeated. Likewise, the arrangement continues to the upper corners of the door. On the third layer, above the door, there are no obscene images. Here the entire section is divided in to many compartments by the pillars looking similar to the previously described ones. Each compartment carries images of male musicians playing instruments like drums, clarinet, etc. In the fourth layer, a flowering creeper motif is carved in a way similar to the pattern of movement of a snake or like the movement of the waves. Within each ridge and trough created by the waves is filled with images of an *Apsara* or a dancing divine female beauty.*

Above the door, in the fourth layer no *Apsara* or creepers are found. This part is divided in to many compartments by the pillars carved like those in the third layer. In each of these compartments a male figure is seen sitting with

* FOOT NOTE: The local term for *Apsara* is *Gelabai* or *Manushya Kautaki*

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THE BOTTOM OF THE RIGHT ARM OF THE DOORWAY



THE BOTTOM OF THE LEFT ARM OF THE DOORWAY

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DECORATION ON THE TOP HORIZONTAL ARM OF THE DOORWAY

his legs crossed and levitating. The right hand side images are having a female sitting on their right thigh and the left hand images with a female sitting on their left thigh. The fifth layer is decorated with a number of small and well-decorated pillars. The fifth layer over the door is divided into many compartments by the pillars like the two layers below it, and each compartment contains a musician playing drums, etc. The carvings on the sixth layer are similar to that of the third layer. The seventh layer consists of motifs looking like a chain of half blossomed flowers of cucumber. This motif runs symmetrically on all the three sides of the doorway.* After this layer, there is a border. The front of the border is carved with tree branch motifs and next to it with bead string motifs. Triangular stone pieces, like those projecting at regular intervals from each layer of the *Pidha* of *Mukhashala*, are also seen here. On the border near the door, there is *Marani* with lotus petals and each lotus petal is decorated with bead string motifs. At the central portion, above the door, in every layer, there are some raised surfaces. Two pillars of *Anta Bhanga Khamba* type raised from the lower *Pada* are placed on both the sides of this raised surface. The carvings on every layer of the doorframe end here. At the middle of the first layer an image of Goddesses Lakshmi sitting in lotus pose *(Padmashana)* has been carved. Lakshmi is holding two full-blossomed lotuses flowers with stems with her two hands. Two elephants are standing on these lotus flowers with two pots full of water held with their trunks and ready to pour them on the head of the goddesses Lakshmi. On both sides of this image are standing two priests or servitors with fans in their hands. This image is known as Gajalakshmi** (Gaja means Elephant). On the second layer, the king is seen sitting in lotus pose *(Padmasana)* and perhaps speaking to his minister. On his right the minister is standing with folded hands and on the left a servant is standing with a fan. These scenes are present on the third, the fourth, the fifth and the sixth layers only with its mirror image form in alternative layers. On the seventh layer, the king is sitting under a three-arched canopy or hood *(Torana)* having two crocodile heads, one on the right and the other on the left side of the canopy looking at the south and the north respectively. (Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra has mistakenly described the crocodile heads as elephant heads.) On the crocodile heads projecting outside the canopy *(Torana)* are placed two lotus flowers. The width of each side of the doorframe is 4 feet and 6 inches and the width of the door is 6 feet and 10 inches. Therefore, the total width of the door including the doorframe is 15 feet and 10 inches.

***FOOT NOTE**: These flowers are known as *Barojhanji* in local terms. *Barojhanji* grows near water sources and its flowers are very attractive.

****FOOT NOTE**: Looking at the lotus flowers on both the hands of Lakshmi, Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra mistakenly considers it as the image of the Sun. However, nowhere, the sun is placed this way above a doorway. Rather, the image of Gajalakshmi, similar to this, is seen everywhere placed on the doorways. Again, Bishan Swarup has also wrongly identified the image as Mahalakshmi as no elephants like this are placed near Mahalakshmi and again, Mahalakshmi is also very rarely seen placed over the doorway. Only such a rare example exists above the front entrance door of the temple of Mukteshwara in Bhubaneswar. This Lakshmi image at Konarka is known as Gajalakshmi as there are two elephants placed on two sides of the image.

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The dimension of all the doorways of the *Mukhashala* and the decoration on them were similar to the one just described. O' Malley, the writer of the Gazetteer of Puri states that, stretching all the layers of the doorframe and placing it one after the other would cover a length of 400 feet.[1] Earlier on both the sides of the door and the doorframe there were two beautiful multifaceted pillars. Fergusson had seen it and taken its mould in the year 1838 AD.[2] However, it was already in ruins when Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra visited Konarka and he saw the surviving portion of it only at the eastern door. Now, in place of this pillar, a new stone pillar has been constructed to provide the required support to the *Pidha*. Like the existence of *Jangha* and *Barandi* on the wall or *Bada* of the *Mukhashala*, there were also the *Jangha* and the *Barandi* sections in the pillar including the usual image of the lion. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra admits to have seen the two lion images of the left pillar. The door and the pillar were located at a distance of 16 feet from the wall of the *Mukhashala*. On these two pillars were placed an iron beam of length 21 feet, height 1 foot and width 8 inches to support the famous *Nabagraha* panel placed on it. The *Nabagraha* panel was initially 19 feet and 10 inches long, 3 feet and 9 inches high and 4 feet and 9 inches thick or it was 353 cubic feet in volume and 26.5 tonnes or 742 *Maunds* (ancient measure of weight) in weight. There were also a lot more carvings in the space between the *Nabagraha* panel and the first *Pidha* of the roof similar to the carvings on the upper *Jangha* of *Mukhashala*, Fergusson had taken a photograph of this place[3]. However, long before Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra visited the place, these, including the *Nabagraha* panel, were all damaged and fallen off the temple.



IRON BEAMS USED TO SUPPORT THE SECOND ROOF (FALSE CEILING) OF MUKHASHALA

***Nabagraha* Panel** –

The *Nabagraha* Panel was lying at the door of the *Mukhashala* for quite a long time. Later, the Bengal Asiatic Society requested the government to give them permission to take it to the museum in Calcutta. The Bengal Government granted three hundred Rupees towards expenses for the purpose. A road was opened through the village leading to the sea. However, the entire money was spent by the concerned Department in carrying the *Nabagraha* panel through a distance of only 200 *cubits* (an ancient measure of length, 1 *cubit* = 1 foot and 6 inches) or 300 feet approximately. Hence, the plan to carry the *Nabagraha* panel to Calcutta was cancelled and it remained there lying under a banyan tree at the southeast corner of the temple. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra had seen the *Nabagraha* panel at this location. Later, the plan for taking the *Nabagraha* panel to Calcutta museum was again revived. Since it was very difficult to carry the entire unit, in 1893 almost two thirds of its thickness was sliced off from its backside, keeping only 1 foot and 6 inches of its total thickness of 4 feet and 9 inches. The thinner front piece contained the images of *Nabagraha*. The thicker one separated from the backside, having no carvings was left lying there. Even then, in spite of using all available techniques, the piece containing the images could be carried only through a distance of two furlongs (1/4 Mille). The mighty block of stone did not move any further. It could not be carried to the sea for loading on to the ship. All trials failed and the funds granted for the job was exhausted. Finally the *Nabagraha* panel remained there exposed to the sun and rain, facing the open sky and waiting for a new technology to be available to facilitate its easy movement. Later, the local priests built a thatched roof over it and started worshipping the *Nabagraha* there. Now, a brick and cement house is built in the

1. L.S.S. O' Malley – Bengal District - Gazetteer - Puri – P. 274
2. Dr. J. Fergusson– Picturesque Illustrations of Ancient Architecture in Hindustana – P. 281
3. Ibd – Plate – II

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NABAGRAHA

RAVI, SOM, MANGALA, BUDHA, BRUHASPATI, SHUKRA, SHANI, RAHU AND KETU

The servitors of Nabagraha who are considered as the descendants of Persian Aryans are still living in two villages, Madhipur and Santhapur, adjacent to the temple of Konarka.

Andrew Sterling states that during his visit to Konarka in 1822 he had seen the Nabagraha Panel above the eastern door and the false ceiling of the Mukhashala to have been there intact.



THE REAR CUTOUT PORTION OF THE NABAGRAHA PANEL

This portion constituting 2/3 thickness of the Nabagraha Panel was cut off by the British people to make its transportation to Calcutta easier. However, their venture was unsuccessful and the cut off portion is still lying near the compound of Konarka temple. Nabagraha is being worshipped in a building constructed close to the compound wall of the temple and these are the only deities in Konarka who are being worshipped till date since its renovation.

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compound of Konarka and the *Nabagraha* panel is kept in that house. A ritual is observed for the *Nabagraha* on every Saturdays, *Sankranti* (the first day of monthly movement of the Sun from one astrological sign to the other) and on *Rasha Purnima* (the full moon day in the month of February-March). The *Nabagraha* are the only deities being worshipped at Konarka now. *Nabagraha* panel is another example of the high level of skill possessed by the sculptors of Konarka. The visitors to Konarka are especially attracted towards its beauty.

The *Nabagraha* panel is described below basing on the writings of Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra.[1]

The front of the panel is divided into nine compartments; each compartment having a *Graha* (Planet God) in human form decorated with many different ornamental carvings. Each of them wears a finely carved high-pointed crown. The *Grahas* are seated cross-legged on lotus petals with their feet placed on their thighs. Beautiful thick pillars of small size are placed on both sides of the compartment with a *Tribhanga Torana* (canopy with three arches) at the top of it. The carvings on the canopy and the other elements here are quite elegant. From the left, the first image is *Ravi* or *Surya* (the Sun). As per Vyashadeva's *Nabagraha Shtotra* or Hymns to the Nine Planets, the colour of *Ravi* or Sun is bright like *Yabakusum* (hibiscus flower) (Hymn No.1*). However, here he is seen as a softhearted human being sitting and holding two lotus flowers with his two hands raised up to the shoulder. The second image is that of *Soma* or *Chandra* (the Moon) and looks exactly like the first image except that its hands are not raised; they are extended towards the front holding a bead string with one hand and a water pot with the other. As per the Hymns (Hymn No.2*) of Vyshadeva, his colour is that of ice. The third one is the image of *Mangala* (Mars) and the fourth is *Budha* (Mercury), the son of *Chandra* or the *Moon*. The fifth one is *Bruhaspati* (Jupiter), the sixth is *Shukra* (Venus), and the seventh is *Shani* (Saturn). All the images look identical with respect to size, shape and decoration, except that of *Bruhaspati* (Jupiter) who wears a beard. As per the Hymns, (Hymn No.3*) *Mangala* (Mars) is the son of the earth, red in colour, powerful and bright like lightning. The colour of *Budha* (Mercury - Hymn No.4*), the son of *Chandra* (Moon), is dark like that of *Priyangu* (Panicum Italicum) blossoms and possesses a handsome appearance along with all the good qualities. *Bruhaspati* (Jupiter - Hymn No.5*) is golden in colour. He is the guru of the saints and the gods. *Shukra* (Venus - Hymn No.6*) is the son of saint Bhrigu. He is the guru of the demons and a very learned person. His colour is like that of the winter Jasmine (Jesmenia pubescens). *Shani* (Saturn - Hymn No.7*) is the son of *Ravi* (Sun) and his wife Chhaya. He is deep blue in colour. The eighth image is *Rahu* (Hymn No.8*), the son of Sinhika. *Rahu*, the ascending node, was born as the upper part of a human form, the lower part being known as *Ketu*, the descending node. *Rahu* is a ferocious image and as per the epics, causes pain to the Sun and the Moon by swallowing it to produce eclipses. On the *Nabagraha* panel *Rahu* looks like a grinning ferocious demon with one large canine tooth projecting from the upper jaw of his mouth. Its crown is circular with three horns raised upwards. Rays of light emanate from it in radial manner and surrounds *Rahu's* face as a concentric circle. With his left hand he holds a round object. Sterling assumes it to be a hatchet, but probably, it is the Sun. In his right hand he is holding a crescent moon (Page 164). Lastly, the

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1. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra – Antiquities of Orissa – Vol. II – P. 153

***FOOT NOTE**: Hymns for each Planet God - (Verses written in Sanskrit language – Transliterated version)–

(1) Jaba-Kusuma-Sankasham-Kashyapeymn Mahadyutin
Dhwantarin Sarbapapaghnam Prantosmi Dibakaram............. (1)

(2) Dibyashankham Tusharavam Kshirodarnaba-Samvabam
Namasi Shashinam Vaktya Shamvormukuta-Vushanam.......... (2)

(3) Dharanigarvasamvutam Bidyutpunja-Samapravam
Kumaram Shaktihastancha Lohitanga Namamyaham............ (3)

(4) Priyangu Kalikashyamam Rupenapratirmam Budhham
Soumyam Sarbagunopetam namami Shashinah Sutam........... (4)

(5) Debatanamrushinam Ta Gurum Kanak-Sannivam
Bandya Vutam Trilokesham Pranamami Bruhaspatim........... (5)

(6) Hima-Kunda-Mrunalavam Daityanam Paramam Guru
Sarba-Shastra-Prabaktaram Vargam Pranamamyaham........... (6)

(7) Nilanchanachaya-Preksham Rabi-Sunum Mahagraham
Chhayayagarvasamvutam Bande Vaktya Shaneishcharam........ (7)

(8) Ardhhakayam Mahaghoram Chandradityabimarddakam
Singhakayah Sutam Roudram Tam Rahum Pranamamyaham..... (8)

(9) Palaladhumasamkasham Taragrahabimarddakam
Roudram Rudratmakam Krram Tam Ketu Pramamyaham........ (9)

– ***Nabagraha Stotra*** written by Vyshadeva - (Appendix – II, Sl. No. 18)

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ninth image is *Ketu* (Hymn No.9*), the son of Rudra. His colour is like that of smoke coming out of smouldering straw or dried grass. He is ferocious, troublesome and causes pain to the stars and the planets. His upper part of the body is like that of the first four images of the panel and the lower part, below the waist is like that of a serpent coiled at the bottom of the image which is sometimes wrongly perceived as the bottom of the seventh *Graha*. All the images are quite developed and since the parts of the body are made quite flabby, they look like female figures. In fact, Sterling has described the sixth image, *Shukra* (Venus) as a young female. In Europe the Moon and the Venus are considered as females. For that reason Sterling wrongly identified *Shukra* as a female. However, in India, the Moon and the Venus are never imagined as female figures in any age or place. On the panel, *Shukra* has not been carved differently than the others. Similar *Nabagraha* panels are installed at the entrance of almost all the major temples in Odisha. Nowhere, the prime guru of the demons *Shukra* is seen as a female. The epics describe *Shukra* with one damaged eye. However, here in this panel at Konarka, both of his eyes are shown in perfect condition. As the *Nabagraha* or the nine Planet Gods are considered to be the controllers of destiny, it is believed that the temple would fare very well by installing the *Nabagraha* panel at the top of the doorway of its main entrance. In between two canopies on the *Nabagraha* panel flying celestial female figures with wings (fairies) are placed. At the top of each canopy *(Torana)* an image like the coat-of-arms is carved. This image at the top of the seventh compartment is broken.

The picture of the rope used for the unsuccessful trial of dragging the *Nabagraha* panel for loading it on to ship for sending to Calcutta is given at the end of Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra's book *Antiquities of Orissa.*

The Inside of *Mukhashala* -

The inside of *Mukhashala* is now filled with sand and is closed from outside. Hence, it is impossible to freshly describe it now. However, the following description is given based on the narration of Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra and the others -

The inside of *Mukhashala* is not decorated with carvings. Only a *Bandhana,* at a height of 5 feet runs around all the four sides like the one existing in the main temple. Above each of the three doors there was a hole. The west side door was the entrée point for the main temple and its doorframe was made of chlorite. A *Nabagraha* panel was installed above this doorway.

The inside floor of the *Mukhashala* is square in shape with each side measuring 60 feet in length. However, as per the measurements given in *Madala Panji* the *Bedha* or thickness of each wall of *Mukhashala* is 8 Kathhi or 14 feet and for two walls it is 16 Kathhi or 28 feet. The length of the inside floor is 29 - 5/8 *Kathhi* or approximately 52 feet. Hence the length of the floor including the walls or the length of the *Bada* from outside is 80 feet.

There were four pillars inside the *Mukhashala*. The ceiling above was resting on the iron beams placed on these pillars. In 1848, the pillars broke down and the beams fell off. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra says that, it was the second roof below the main *Pidha* roof and they were separated by a substantial gap between them. Hence, no major damage was caused to the main *Pidha* roof of the *Mukhashala* due to collapse of the inner roof. The inner roof was placed on iron beams rested on the pillars. The beams were 12 feet to 20 feet in length and quite thick. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra had seen the ruined parts of the pillars and the inside of *Mukhashala* filled with stones from the fallen roof. He also saw some beams hanging from the wall with one end resting on it and other end hanging free. Though Abul Fazl had written that the inner wall was decorated, Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra did not see any trace of decoration on it. The walls of *Mukhashala* were plain and plastered like that of the main temple.

Stairs -

There were three staircases in front of each doorway located in the east, south and north of the *Mukhashala*. Except their lower platforms all the stairs are in ruins now. The *Peetha* was reached through these stairs. The number of steps existing in each of these staircases is not known yet. However, as per *Madala Panji* there were 17 steps on each staircase. At the *Peetha*, the length of each step was 42 feet and 6 inches and the width was 3 feet and 6 inches. Bishan Swarup assumes that there were two walls on both sides of the stairs. Abul Fazl writes that on the eastside door there was a canopy *(Torana)* with the planets and stars carved on it. As per *Madala Panji*, the width of the pillar carrying the canopy *(Torana)* was 4 *Kathhi* or 7 feet. At the time the measurement was taken by King Narasingha Deba-II (1627 - 1628 AD) the canopy was in ruins. It is said that, the canopy was so high that all the ornamental work done on the doorframe was visible from the front without being obstructed by it.

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There were seven well-decorated horses on the east side stairs with four horses on the right side and three on the left. The ruins of some of the horses are still seen today. These seven horses placed there give an impression that they are drawing the Konarka chariot of the Sun God. At the end of the eastside stairs there were two huge lions on both sides of the steps. Presently, both the lions are relocated in front of the *Natya Mandira*. Likewise, there were two horses installed at the south side stairs and two elephants at the north side stairs. Now, these elephants and the horses are placed at a little distance away from the *Mukhashala* inside the compound of Konarka Temple. These elephants and horses will be described in Chapter VIII.



THE TOP PORTION OF THE SOUTH-SIDE DOORFRAME

The doorframe is in ruins and the top portion of it is lying on the ground under a tree inside the temple campus. There were three such doorframes on the three sides of Mukhashala (East, North and South). Presently only the eastern doorframe is in place. It is said that the Nabagraha panel installed at the ruined south-side entrance was carried away by a Guru of the Marahattas, Baba Brahmachari to Puri and it was installed at the doorway of the Gundicha Temple there. (The picture of this Nabagraha Panel is given on Page 258 of this book.) - Alica Boner and Sadasiva Rath Sharma – New Light on the Sun Temple of Konarka – Acknowledgements – Page iii



MUKHASHALA - VIEW FROM THE NORTH-EAST SIDE

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CHAPTER VII

NATYA MANDIRA (THE DANCE HALL)

The *Natya Mandira* (Dance Hall) of Konarka temple is built on a separate plinth in front of the *Mukhashala*. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra and Manomohan Ganguli do not agree to accept this structure as the dance hall. They rather identify it as the *Bhoga Mandapa* (the Hall of Offerings) and further state that the *Natya Mandira* was planned to be built at the space between this temple and the *Mukhashala* which could not be materialised. However, their assumption seems to be wrong. As said earlier, the seven horses and the wheels of the chariot temple were placed in front of the *Mukhashala*. An expansive staircase was built there and two huge size *Gaja-Singha* images were placed on its both sides. It will be described later in this chapter that there was also a beautiful staircase built on the west side of the *Natya Mandira*. Had the *Natya Mandira* been planned to be built in between the *Mukhashala* and this structure identified by Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra and Manomohan Ganguli as the *Bhoga Mandapa*, then these two staircases would not have been built there so elegantly had they have to be demolished after some days to make way for the *Natya Mandira* in its place. At the temples of Bhubaneswar and Puri the *Natya Mandira* is built on the same platform as that of the main temple and the *Mukhashala*. Had the *Natya Mandira* been planned to be constructed this way at Konarka, only the main temple and the porch would not have been constructed as a chariot and all the wheels of the chariot would not have been placed on these two structures only. Rather, all the wheels would have been placed distributed on the entire complex consisting of the *Deula*, the *Mukhashala*, the *Natya Mandira* and the *Bhoga Mandapa* and the seven horses would have been placed in front of the last temple, that is, the structure considered as the *Bhoga Mandapa* by Dr. Mitra and Mr. Ganguli.



NATYA MANDIRA
View from the northeast corner
The iron beams once supporting the false ceiling of Mukhashala are seen lying here in the foreground.

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NATYA MANDIRA
East-side view – the main entrance

The decorative carvings on this temple suggest that it was nothing other than the *Natya Mandapa* or *Natya Mandira*. As described later in this chapter, the *Bada* and the *Peetha* of this temple is filled with carvings of male and female figures singing, dancing and playing different musical instruments with devotion to god (Page 121). There is no trace of obscenity in the carvings on this temple. Again, such heavy concentration of images of the dancers and the musicians are not seen anywhere else in this entire temple complex, not even on the main temple or on the *Mukhashala*. Had it been the *Bhoga Mandapa*, so many images of the dancers and musicians would not have been placed here. For example, the temple at Puri bears many beautiful carvings on the *Bhoga Mandapa* but such heavy concentration of images of the dancers is not found there. Again, the *Bhoga Mandapa* at Puri has four doors with doorframes on all sides. Except the west side door all others here are kept always closed. The *Natya Mandira* or *Natya Mandapa* at Konarka has only openings at all the four sides, but no doors or doorframes exist or ever existed there. For this reason the *Natya Mandira* is also known as *Natya Mandapa* (Dance Pandal).

Bhoga Mandapa is not an essential part of a temple. There are many temples built without a *Bhoga Mandapa* and it is also true that, not in all cases, the *Bhoga Mandapa* was built at the same time along with the main temple. The temple at Puri did not have a *Bhoga Mandapa* for many years. According to Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra it was built by the Marahattas towards the end of the 18th Century AD.[1] Even today only one offering is made in the *Bhoga Mandapa* every day in Puri temple and it is not done with so many rituals like the offerings made in the morning, afternoon, evening or even at night when the *Bada Singhara* ritual is conducted. It is done simply with a clap and the minimum of rituals. The *Bhoga Mandapa* was a later addition to the temple complexes to meet the rising demand for *Anna Prasada* (offerings of cooked rice). However, the main temple at Konarka was so spacious that there was no need for a separate *Bhoga Mandapa*. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra, contradicting his own earlier opinion, "the structure was not a dance hall", later stated that, "Originally it must have been intended either for a Dancing Hall, a place of entertainment and music, xxxxx."[2]

1. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra – Antiquities of Orissa – Vol. II – P. 120
2. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra – Antiquities of Orissa – Vol. II – P. 150

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GAJA-SINGHA
The Gaja-Singhas once placed at the main (east) entrance of the Mukhashala are now relocated at the base of the east-side stairs of Natya Mandira.



NATYA MANDIRA
North-side entrance

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THE UPPER PLINTH AND THE WALL ABOVE IT - NATYA MANDIRA

When Dr. Mitra visited Konarka, the *Natya Mandira* was completely covered with debris, trees and foliage. Had he seen the way it is exposed today and examined its construction and decoration, he would have been definitely convinced that it was nothing other than the *Natya Mandira*.

The *Natya Mandira* is a *Pancharatha* temple. However, the way the *Pagas* have been projected outward differentiating them from each other in the main temple; it is not so in this case. The *Pancharatha* construction of the temple starts from the lower platform. The *Peetha* is constructed over this lower platform leaving a space of 2 feet and 7 inches from all sides. In vertical manner the *Peetha* is divided in to three smaller *Peethas*. The first *Peetha* is 2 feet and 4 inches in height. It has *Tini Kama* (Three decorative sections) consisting of *Pada, Kani* and *Basanta*. The *Kani* is carved with lotus petals, *Basanta* with creepers and there are no carvings on *Pada*.

The second *Peetha* (plinth) is built up to a height of 9 feet and 7 inches from the first *Peetha*. It has five sections like *Jangha, Tala Barandi* or *Shakara, Bandhana, Upara Barandi* or *Shikara* and *Upara Jangha*. The sculptural work on the lower *Jangha* is similar to the conventional work on the other *Janghas*. However, the *Upara Jangha* is divided into *Tini Kama* (three decorative sections) in place of the usual *Sata Kama* (seven decorative sections). The portion between both the *Janghas*, around the temple, is filled with many small size *Pidha* temples, having alternatively one wide temple and then a narrow one. All these small temples look like pillars and from a distance the entire *Peetha* looks as if it is built with a number of pillars only. To create variety in this congregation of vertical temples, some carvings have also been done in parallel to the ground. Apart from *Jangha* and *Bandhana, Pidhas* and *Padas* of all these small temples are placed at equal heights from the ground and hence they look like a straight and continuous band even if there are gaps in between them. There are also gaps in between the carvings parallel to the ground. This is the style of Konarka temple showing the variety within symmetrical arrangements. The gaps between these small *Pidha* temples are carved with honeycomb motifs. Each of these temples carries the images of *Apsaras* or female divine beauties. All are dancing while playing musical instruments like *Mridanga* (Double sided drum) and *Vina* (A stringed instrument somewhat like Sitar). No obscene image is found anywhere on these small temples. The space above the lower *Barandi* is known as *Bandhana*. It is like a raised border running

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THE LOWER PLINTH OF NATYA MANDIRA



DANCE GURU
(Dance Teacher)



BAFOON
(Masked Dance)



APSARA
(Celestial beauty)

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around the plinth in parallel to the ground creating a separation between the lower *Barandi* and the small temples existing in the upper *Barandi*. There are also dancing *Apsaras* carved on the upper *Barandi*. The upper *Barandi* runs around the plinth at the top of the small *Pidha* temples. At this level, water channels carved with some beautiful elephants are placed all around the plinth at equal intervals between them. At the corner of the *Anartha* and *Raha Paga* are placed some pillars carved with creeper motifs.

The first and the second *Peethas* look like the lower platform for the third *Peetha*. The third *Peetha* has been constructed on the second *Peetha* leaving 11 feet from all sides as veranda. The height of the third *Peetha* is 4 feet and 6 inches. This *Peetha* has three divisions like *Jahgha, Barandi* or *Shakar* and *Upara Jangha*. *Jangha* has three sections like *Pada, Pata* and *Basanta*. *Pada* is decorated with lotus petals. *Pata* and *Basanta* are decorated with flowering creeper motifs. *Barandi* is located above the *Jahgha*. There are a number of small size *Pidha* temples at equal intervals on the *Jangha* having dancing female figures with musical instruments carved on the *Bada* of these small temples. The space between the temples is decorated with honeycomb motifs. Next, above it comes *Upara Jangha* having *Tini Kama* (three sections) like, *Pata, Kani* and *Basanta*. The two gaps in between them are filled with honeycomb motifs. *Basanta* is carved with well-decorated elephants and *Pata* with creeper motifs. The top of this *Peetha* is the floor of the *Natya Mandira* on which the pillars and the walls of the *Natya Mandira* are built. The total height of the *Peetha* (Plinth) of *Natya Mandira*-

Sections	Height
The First *Peetha* (Plinth)	2 feet and 4 inches
The Second *Peetha* (Plinth)	9 feet and 7 inches
The Third *Peetha* (Plinth)	4 feet and 6 inches
Total Height of *Peetha* (Plinth)	16 feet and 5 inches

Earlier, in Chapter IV, it is said that the height of the *Peetha* of the main temple and the *Mukhashala* is 16 feet and 6 inches. Hence, the plinth of the *Natya Mandira* was built with almost equal height to that of the main temple and the *Mukhashala*. The second Peetha is square in shape being 7 feet long on each side from the wall of the third *Peetha*. At four sides of the second *Peetha* there are four staircases. The west side staircase is different from all the others. From the lower platform, two staircases have been raised from the north and the south side up to the veranda on the second *Peetha*. At the level of this veranda, there is a large space between the stairs making the veranda at the top of this staircase very wide. At the lower platform, the distance between the two staircases is 42 feet and 8 inches. Each step is 1 foot and 11 inches wide, 7 feet and 10 inches long and 10 inches in height. The decoration in the gap between two staircases is similar to that of the *Peetha*. The north side stairs are semi-circular in shape. The diameter of the lowest step of the staircase is 14 feet and 3 inches in the east-west direction and the distance from the *Peetha* to the end of the lowest stair is 20 feet and 9 inches. Width of each of the steps is 2 feet and 4 inches and the height is 10 inches. The south and the east side stairs are usually rectangular. The length of the lowest stair on the south side is 12 feet and 2 inches and the width and the breadth are equal to the width and the breadth of the west side stairs. The sides of the eastside stairs have been raised up to a height of 25 feet, that is, to the level of the second *Peetha* acting like a wall on both sides of the staircase. The width of this wall on each side is 5 feet. Between these two walls the staircase is built with a width of 15 feet.

At the bottom of these walls, on both the sides of the staircase, two large size images of *Gaja-Singha* (Elephant-Lion – Page 119) are placed on a low height platform. The *Gaja-Singha* image consists of a rampart lion pounced on an elephant lying with its head down on the ground. The elephant is holding a man with its trunk. It is tied with chains having a bell hanging from it. As the elephant is pounced upon by the lion from behind, the elephant is standing with only its hind legs with its front legs raised and is pressed down under the belly of the lion. An iron bar of 1½ inch in width joins the lion at its navel with the back of the elephant. The entire weight of the lion from its head to its navel is supported by this iron bar and is being well supported till date. The lion, the elephant and the human figure are carved out of a single block of stone. However, the hands might have been crafted separately and joined to it. The height of this entire structure is 9 feet and 2 inches having a width of 4 feet and 9 inches and length of 8 feet and 4 inches. Manomohan Ganguli has calculated the volume of this entire structure as 360 cubic feet. As per his calculation, the type of stone used for this structure weighs 171 pounds per cubic

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foot. Hence the total weight of the structure would be 61560 pounds or 27.48 Tons, or approximately 769½ or say 770 *Maunds*.[1]

The pillars and the walls of the *Natya Mandira* are built over the third *Peetha*. The outside of the wall is divided in to five sections like *Tala Jangha, Tala Barandi* or *Shakara, Bandhana, Upara Barandi* or *Shikara* and *Upara Jangha*. The *Tala Jangha* is decorated with *Pancha Kama* (Five decorative sections), *Bandhana* with *Tini Kama* (Three decorative sections) and the *Upara Jangha* with *Naba Kama* (Nine decorative sections) in place of usual *Sata Kama* (Seven decorative sections). The *Tala Jangha* of the walls is decorated in a way similar to that on the *Tala Jangha* of the *Peethas*. The *Shakara* of the wall is also decorated like the *Shakara* of the *Peetha* with small *Pidha* temples having dancing female figures carved on them and the space between the adjacent temples decorated with honeycomb motifs. The only difference between the carvings on the *Peetha* and those on the walls is that the carvings on the walls are larger in size, dense and comparatively much more beautiful. The *Bandhana* carries a border *(Pata)*, the *Basanta* carries creeper motifs and the *Dori* in between these two has no decoration. The carvings on the *Shikara* are identical to that of *Shakara* except that, at places some images of male figures and musicians are seen on *Shikara*. Most of the male and the female images on the *Shikara* have deteriorated badly due to the corrosive effect of the weather. The *Upara Jangha* has nine sections like *Pata, Pheni, Kani, Basanta*, etc. and except the *Kani* all other sections are decorated with creeper motifs, lotus motifs and bead string motifs. The lotus motif has been extensively used all over the *Natya Mandira*. Like the rose flower was being used extensively for worship of the god and goddesses in the ancient countries of Greece and Rome,* in India and also in Odisha the lotus flower was being used the same way and was carved in many different forms on the temples for decoration.



ONE OF THE PILLARS INSIDE NATYA MANDIRA

The height of the walls of the *Natya Mandira* is 10 feet and 8 inches. There are stone blocks at four sides of the wall up to a height of 2 feet above the exits serving like a *Pata*. The temple above this level has collapsed.

The *Natya Mandira* has four exits at four sides. There are no doors or doorframes existing now or ever existed there. Hence, it seems that it was built like a pandal. Three steps at each of these four exits lead down to the veranda on the second plinth. Excepting the north side, there are windows on the walls at all the other sides. The windows are built with a number of small vertical pillars dividing the openings on the walls. The carvings on the outside of these pillars are similar to those present on sections like the walls. The length of the floor of the third plinth is 52 feet including the walls and the inside length of the floor is 36 feet and 5 inches. There are four pillars inside *Natya Mandira* which bear no decoration on them up to a height of 2 feet and 10 inches (Page 123). All sides of these pillars, from the beginning to the end, are divided into five narrow pillars and all the narrow pillars are carved in *Pancharatha* style like the *Natya Mandira* itself. These pillars are made of the usual *Tala Jangha*,

1. Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P. 468

***FOOT NOTE**: In the ancient Rome and Greece rose was considered as the best among the flowers. As per the epics of Greece, the heaven is always flooded with the essence of rose. Graces or the goddesses of different wisdoms are always adorned with garlands of rose. It is said that, Emperor Nero had once spent many thousand Pounds for buying roses for a party he had arranged on certain occasion. Empress Cleopatra used to always keep the floor of her palace covered with roses up to a height of 1½ feet.

– The English Man-24/07/16

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CARVINGS ON THE WALLS OF NATYA MANDIRA

Tala Barandi, etc. The *Tala Jangha* is of height 2 feet, and in place of *Pancha Kama*, there is only *Tini Kama*, like *Pata, Kani* and *Basanta*. There are creeper motifs on *Pata* and no carvings on *Kani*. On the *Raha Paga, Basanta* is decorated with two elephants with bead string motifs around them. At the other pillars *Basanta* is decorated with bead string motifs and with creeper and flower motifs at certain places. On the *Raha Paga* of these narrow pillars, a vertical panel decorated with creeper motifs joins the three decorated horizontal sections of *Tala Jangha*.

Above it is the *Tala Barandi* having a height of 3 feet and 8 inches and as said earlier, it is divided by a number of narrow pillars making this section very beautiful to look at. On each of the pillars, located at the sides, are images of *Asta Sakhi* (eight female figures), standing cross legged on full bloom lotus flowers holding water pots for offering to god. On the Madhya Paga (middle pillar) there is a *Gaja – Shardula* (Elephant-Lion) image carved on to its surface. The space between two pillars is decorated with creeper and bead string motifs carved vertically. At the head of the *Tala Barandi*, the beautifully carved bead strings look as if they are actually hanging down from it. The *Bandhana* located above the *Tala Barandi* is divided with *Tini Kama* like *Pada, Dori* and *Pata*. *Pada* and *Pata* are decorated with creeper motifs while the *Dori* in between them is decorated with bead strings. Like in the *Tala Jangha* portion, there is also a vertical plate with creeper motifs joining these three horizontal sections. The portion above the *Bandhana* is *Shikara* or *Upara Barandi* which has already fallen off the temple and not seen any longer. The height of the pillars from the floor of the *Natya Mandira* up to the end of the *Bandhana* is 9 feet and 9 inches and the distance between two adjacent pillars of these four pillars varies from 10 feet to 10 feet and 3 inches. The distance of each pillar from the wall is 6 feet and 3 inches. The pillars are square in cross section being 7 feet on each side.

On both the sides of the exits of the *Natya Mandira* are two round pillars of diameter 2 feet and 1 inch (Page 119). Each pillar has sections like *Jangha* and *Barandi*, etc. The *Jangha* is further divided in to five properly decorated sections like *Pada* and *Kumbha*, etc. The *Barandi* is decorated with female figures dancing with musical instruments. Above it, there are motifs of creepers and flowers carved in a vertical manner, and its top is carved with bead

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strings and bells. The heads of the pillars above the bead strings are not seen with their complete shapes as they are broken substantially. Bishan Swarup says that the square shaped heads of the pillars were decorated with beautiful carvings of lotus flowers. The height of the *Jangha* of these pillars is 2 feet and 11 inches, from the *Jangha* to the *Mastaka* (head) is 3 feet and 9 inches and the height of the surviving part of the *Mastaka* is 2 feet.



KUBERA
-on the plinth of Natya Mandira



SHIVA
-on the plinth of Natya Mandira



YAMA
-on the plinth of Natya Mandira

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HIUEN TSANG
-on the plinth of Natya Mandira



GANESHA
-on the plinth of Natya Mandira



DANCERS
-on the plinth of Natya Mandira



MUSICIANS
-on the plinth of Natya Mandira

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UDANTA GANDHARVA
Flying celestial male musician and his female partner

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IMAGE OF SOME VERY IMPORTANT PERSON CONNECTED WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF NATYA MANDIRA

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THE INSCRIPTION AT THE FEET OF THE IMAGE

FEMALE MUSICIANS PLAYING DRUMS

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GARVAMUDRA OF NATYA MANDIRA

The Garvamudra used to close the opening at the top of the Pidha walls over which the Mastaka was placed fell off the top of Natya Mandira when it collapsed. Now it is lying at the north-east side of the temple. It was placed at the top of the walls with the beautiful lotus carved on it facing downwards, towards the inside of the temple.

A huge block of stone, having a large size lotus of diameter 5 feet carved on it, is lying on the ground at the south-west corner of the *Natya Mandira*. The lotus is carved with two layers of petals having sixteen petals on the upper layer and eight on the lower with singing and dancing *Apsaras* carved on them. Both the layers of the lotus petals are also decorated with bead strings. A small size lotus is carved at the centre carrying the image of the Sun God, with lotus flowers in his both hands and riding his seven horses with two attendants on his sides. This stone block is most likely the *Garbha Mudra* (the part placed on the top of the *Rekha* or *Pidha* walls of a temple over which the head block of the temple is placed) of the *Natya Mandira* which fell off the temple when it collapsed. The roof of the *Natya Mandira* was of *Pidha* style like that of the *Mukhashala*. The assumption of Manomohan Ganguli that, 'the roof of the *Natya Mandira* was never completed as the temple of Konarka was deserted before its completion' is quite wrong. When Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra visited the *Natya Mandira*, like the main temple, it was also under a heap of stone blocks covered with trees and dense foliage. During the rescue operation of Konarka, the *Natya Mandira* emerged from under the debris. Had its roof not been completed, where did so many stone blocks come from? Obviously these stone blocks came from the collapsed roof. Again, Manomohan Ganguli also says that, some portion of the roof was seen by Prasnna Kumar Pal, L.C.E who was engaged in the rescue activity of Konarka for some time.[1] Moreover, the stone block, supposed to be the *Garbha Mudra* of *Natya Mandira*, lying near the temple indicates that it had a roof and this stone block was placed on it indicating its completion. Later it fell off to the ground as the temple collapsed.

1. Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P.P. 472

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THE TEMPLE OF RAMACHANDI

During the rescue operation of Konarka, a very elegant temple, though in ruins, was discovered at the south-west side of the main temple. Bishan Swarup describes it as the temple of Mayadevi. Earlier, in Chapter II of this book, referring to a legend, I have said that, it was the temple of Ramachandi, the prime goddess of Konarka, who is now installed at the mouth of the River Liyakhia or the present-day Kushabhadra. On my two visits to Konarka, I enquired about this temple and talked to many important persons and the priests of the locality to collect information about it. However, nobody confirmed that it was Mayadevi's temple and the people were not even aware of the very name Mayadevi. Those who remember so clearly the events from the beginning of construction of Konarka to its end, that is from the story of Shibei Santara to that of Kalapahada, how is it possible for them not to be aware of Mayadevi, the supposed prime goddess of Konarka? It seems so impossible.



THE ORIGINAL TEMPLE OF RAMACHANDI

Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra identifies this temple to be that of Goddess Ramachandi who was shifted to the new location at the mouth of river Kushabhadra (Liyakhia) after Kalapahada attacked and destroyed this temple along with many others inside the campus of Konarka. However, Bishan Swarup believes this temple belongs to Mayadevi, the mother of Buddha. Some others say it belongs to Chhayadevi, the wife of the Sun God. Some even presume that it was built as a model to pre-visualise the temple that was finally built. Considering the reasons cited by Pandit Mishra here and the reasons stated by Sudhansu Sekhar Rath, the translator of the book in the section "A Few Words..." (Page 5 Paragraph 3) it seems that the temple has been appropriately identified by Pandit Mishra as that of Ramachandi. Hence, all references to it in this book are made in that light, that is, as the temple of Ramachandi.

As per the legend about Shibei Santara in connection with the construction of the temple at Konarka, he had once offered prayers to Ramachandi for blessings after he failed to lay the foundation of the temple on the river gorge. Hence, there is no doubt that Ramachandi was the prime goddess of Konarka. Had Mayadevi been the prime goddess of Konarka and as the temple was being constructed there, then Shibei Santara would not have gone so far to the mouth of River Liyakhia to pray to Ramachandi for her blessings.

Everybody knows that, after the temple of Konarka was desecrated and abandoned, the image of Suryanarayana (the Sun God) was installed in the temple of Indra inside the compound of the temple of Jagannatha in Puri and is still being worshipped there till date. Suryanarayana, being the presiding deity, was the most important deity of the place and so was Mayadevi, if presumed to be the prime goddess of the place. Hence like Suryanarayana, after the collapse of the temple, Mayadevi would also have been installed somewhere else for continuance of her rituals

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and worship. The god-fearing Hindus would not have abandoned the goddess without making arrangements for her settlement. It seems quite impossible for them to abandon and forget Mayadevi completely, especially when she was supposedly the prime goddess of Konarka. However, as Mayadevi has not been installed anywhere and is not being worshipped now, it is not probable that she was the prime goddess of Konarka. Rather, it is more appropriate to think that, like Mahamaya Bimala installed at the south-west corner of the Jagannatha temple of Puri as the prime goddess, Mayamayi Ramachandi had also been installed at the south-west corner of the temple of Konarka as the prime goddess. Manomohan Ganguli has rightly identified this temple as the temple of Ramachandi.

Like the other structures existing at Konarka temple, there was a *Deula* or *Vimana* (the main temple) with a *Mukhashala* or *Jagamohana* (porch) at the temple complex of Ramachandi. Though the temple was smaller in size in comparison to that of Konarka, its decoration, play of light and shade on its body and the variety and symmetry in arrangements of sculpture were all identical in many respects to that of the main temple of Konarka. The main temple of Ramachandi was of *Rekha* type, with a *Pidha* type *Mukhashala*, and both were built in *Pancharatha* style.



THE PLINTH OF RAMACHANDI TEMPLE

Like the temple of Konarka, the main temple and the porch of the temple of Ramachandi are built over a common plinth of height 3 feet and 3 inches. The plinth has three sections like, *Pada, Kani* and *Basanta*. There are creeper motifs in front portion of the *Pada* having *Marani* (a rising slope gradually indented towards the inside of the wall) and lotus petals above it. There are no carvings on *Kani*. *Basanta* contains the scenes of well-attired soldiers.

There is practically no veranda on the *Peetha* (plinth). The *Bada* of the main temple and the porch are built leaving only 9 inches to 1 foot and 3 inches from the edge of the plinth. The *Bada* of the main temple and also that of the porch are divided in to sections like *Jangha, Barandi* and *Bandhana,* etc. (Page 131). These sections on the porch are lower in height than the respective sections of the main temple. The height of the *Jangha* on the main temple is 6 feet and 9 inches and that on the porch is 5 feet. The gap between these two is filled with carvings of vertical creepers. *Jangha* is, as usual, divided in to sections like *Pada, Kumbha, Kani, Pata* and *Basanta* and are decorated with various carvings. On this *Jangha* there are many round and multifaceted vertical pillars and small size *Pidha* temples. All these small *Pidha* temples have one round pillar on each of its sides having a *Naga Kanya* on it and next to it is one two sided column having bead string motifs with carvings of flowers and creepers in between. Small size *Gaja-Singha* images are carved with a projection of about 6 inches from the body of the temple on the *Kani* and the *Basanta* of the *Jangha* at the bottom of the pillar, and having *Naga Kanyas* above them. Images of many gods and goddesses and also that of *Sakhis* (Alasa Kanya or female beauties) are carved on the *Bada* of the *Pidha* temples. At the western side, on the *Bada* of a *Pidha* temple, a standing naked image of six-armed Shiva has also been carved.

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A PORTION OF THE LOWER BARANDI OF RAMACHANDI TEMPLE



ANOTHER PART OF THE LOWER BARANDI OF RAMACHANDI TEMPLE
Pidha temples, lion, Nagakanya and dancers decorating the Barandi

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A DIFFERENT PART OF THE LOWER BARANDI OF RAMACHANDI TEMPLE
Pidha temples, Vidalas, Naga, Nagakanya, dancers, musicians and erotic couples



PARSHWA DEVATA (NORTH-SIDE)
Ramachandi Temple



PARSHWA DEVATA (SOUTH-SIDE)
Ramachandi Temple

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On the *Upara Barandi* or *Shikara* there are images of *Olta Gaja-Singha* (backward looking elephant-lion) and at places the images of female figures, *Grahas* (planet gods) and those of other gods and goddesses are seen. From this *Barandi*, both the main temple and the porch are broken leaving aside a few portions of the *Mukhashala*. The *Parshwa Devatas* installed on the *Raha Pagas* are the only portions of the main temple now existing.

The *Parshwa Devatas* installed on all the three sides of the main temple are almost similar in construction to those on the main temple of Konarka, except that these are much smaller in size. Only the west side *Parshwa Devata* is made of a different category of stone and all others are made of black granite. Like in the main temple of Konarka, the image of the Sun on the north side is seen sitting on a beautiful horse wearing a crown, earrings and a necklace (Page 134). The carvings on it are ornamental and extremely beautiful. Both the hands of the image are broken and missing. The legs are hanging down at both sides of the horse and the feet are rested on two lotus flowers. One soldier is standing at each side of the Sun God with a sword and a shield in his hands. There are flying angels on both the sides and a three-arched canopy *(Torana)* over the head of the image of the Sun. The *Kirtimukha* (face of *Rahu*) is carved at the centre above the canopy. The 5-foot tall image of the Sun is standing on a Lotus pedestal of height 1 foot. The entire piece of sculpture is 6 feet and 2 inches in height and 3 feet in width.



KIRTIMUKHA (THE FACE OF RAHU)

The hands, the head and the canopy of the image of the Sun, installed as *Parshwa Devata* on the south side is broken (Page 134). However, there is no doubt that, it was built exactly like the image of *Parshwa Devata* on the south wall of the main temple of Konarka (Chapter V).

The image of the Sun once installed at the west side is not available now. During the rescue operation of Konarka it was seen kept leaning to the wall of the *Natya Mandira* (Page 146). Perhaps it was kept there by somebody for the purpose of worshipping it after the temple of Ramachandi collapsed. It will be discussed later in the Chapter VIII of this book.

As evident from the south side pillar (Page 135), on each side of the eastern doorway of the *Mukhashala*, there was a beautiful pillar with different sections, like *Jangha, Barandi, Bandhana*, etc. The south side pillar is broken from the *Tala Barandi* and the north side pillar survives only by the stone block of the very first layer. As per Bishan Swarup, there was a *Nabagraha* Panel of height 2 feet atop these two pillars. The pillars and the *Nabagraha* Panel were at a distance of 9



THE SOUTH-SIDE PILLAR OF RAMACHANDI TEMPLE

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feet from the *Mukhashala*. The east side doorframe was made of 2 feet and 1 inch wide black granite block. It now survives only by a block of stone of length 2 feet and 1 inch and width of 1 foot and 3 inches. It is known from this piece of stone that the first section of the doorframe was decorated with snake motifs, the second with *Gelabai* or *Manushya Kautaki* (creepers in the shape of waves and within each semicircle of the ridges and the troughs there was an *Apsara*). The third section was decorated with female figures. Likewise, there were three sections of decoration on both the sides of the doorframe. However, it is not possible to know the type of images carved on the top portion of the doorframe. In front of this eastern doorway there is a 13 feet long and 23 feet wide veranda with a step built below it.



ENTRANCE TO THE GARVAGRUHA OF RAMACHANDI TEMPLE

The inside floor of the *Mukhashala* is square in shape with each side measuring 28 feet and 3 inches having only one entrance door at the eastern side. At the north and the south sides, at a height of 5 feet above the floor, in place of the doors, it has windows, one on each side. The openings of the windows are divided with stone pillars at intervals of 2 inches. The front face of these pillars of the windows is carved with female figures. The windows are built like cubes having length, width and depth of 6 feet and 4 inches. At Konarka or at any other place in Odisha, usually no decorative carvings are found on the inside wall of *Mukhashala* of the temples except in the case of Ramachandi temple. On each inside wall of the *Mukhashala* of Ramachandi temple there are four pillars built on to it at equal intervals having sections like *Jangha* and *Barandi*. These sections are decorated with

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usual carvings. Specially, the female figures carved on the *Barandi* are extremely beautiful. The pillars are 2 feet in width and are projected by 5 inches from the wall. Near the roof, the walls form an octagonal shape, that is, at each corner a stone block of 1 foot and 3 inches is placed over the adjacent walls, the front of which is carved with elephants, horses and scenes from the war field. These stone blocks were placed over iron beams which do not exist now. The *Pidha* roof that once existed there was built starting from a height of 7 feet and 6 inches from the floor.

As per Bishan Swarup, there was a doorway between the main temple and the *Mukhashala*. The height of the door was 8 feet and 5 inches and the width was 4 feet. On both sides of the door there were *Naga Kanyas*, doorkeepers and also a *Nabagraha* Panel placed above the doorway. All of these have fallen off the doorframe. The images of the *Nabagraha* have become dull with the corrosive effect of the weather. Below the door is placed a carved semi-circular block of black granite stone which, looking from inside the *Mukhashala*, appears like a beautiful lotus flower.

There are no other carvings or decoration on the inside wall of the main temple except a *Barandi* of 1 foot in depth and 7 feet and 6 inches in width running all along the walls. The *Barandi* on the west sidewall is only 3 feet wide.

The throne or the *Singhasana* of the goddess that was once inside the main temple of Ramachandi is not there anymore. Bishan Swarup describes the *Singhasana* to have been 7 feet in length and 7 feet and 6 inches in width.



SIX ARMED NATARAJA
Dancing naked Shiva on the Bada (wall) of Ramachandi Temple

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MAGARAMUKHA
Crocodile heads used as wastewater outlet



MARCHING SOLDIERS



A PART OF THE BOTTOM OF THE BADA OF RAMACHANDI TEMPLE



A PANORAMIC SCENE CARVED ON THE WALL OF RAMACHANDI TEMPLE

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ELABORATE DECORATION OF PILLARS AND MINIATURE TEMPLES ON THE WALLS OF RAMACHANDI TEMPLE

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ELEPHANTS AT WAR

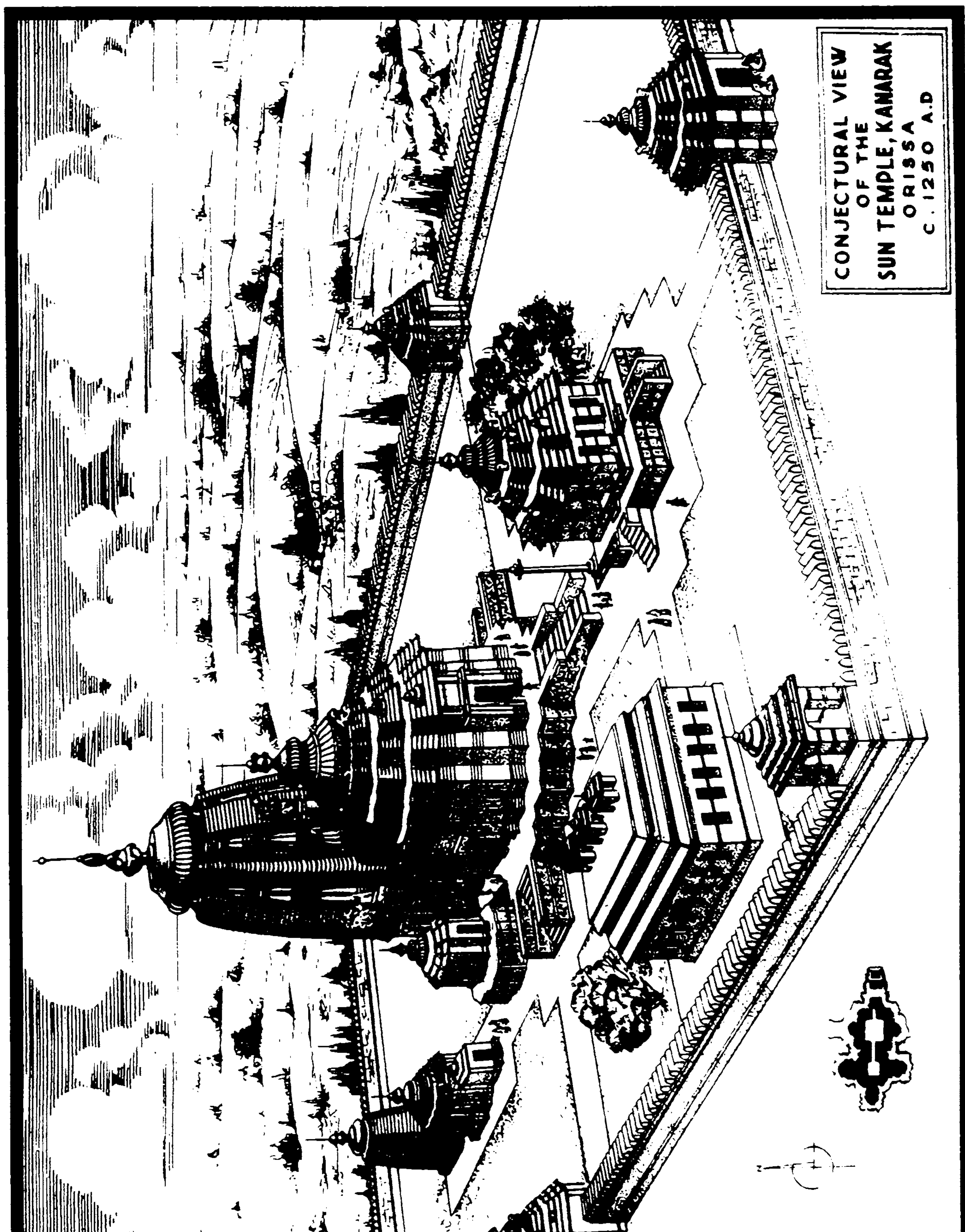


VISHNU TEMPLE

A 10th century temple located at the remote south-west corner of the campus of Konarka Temple constructed with large size bricks of that period joined with lime and sand mortar

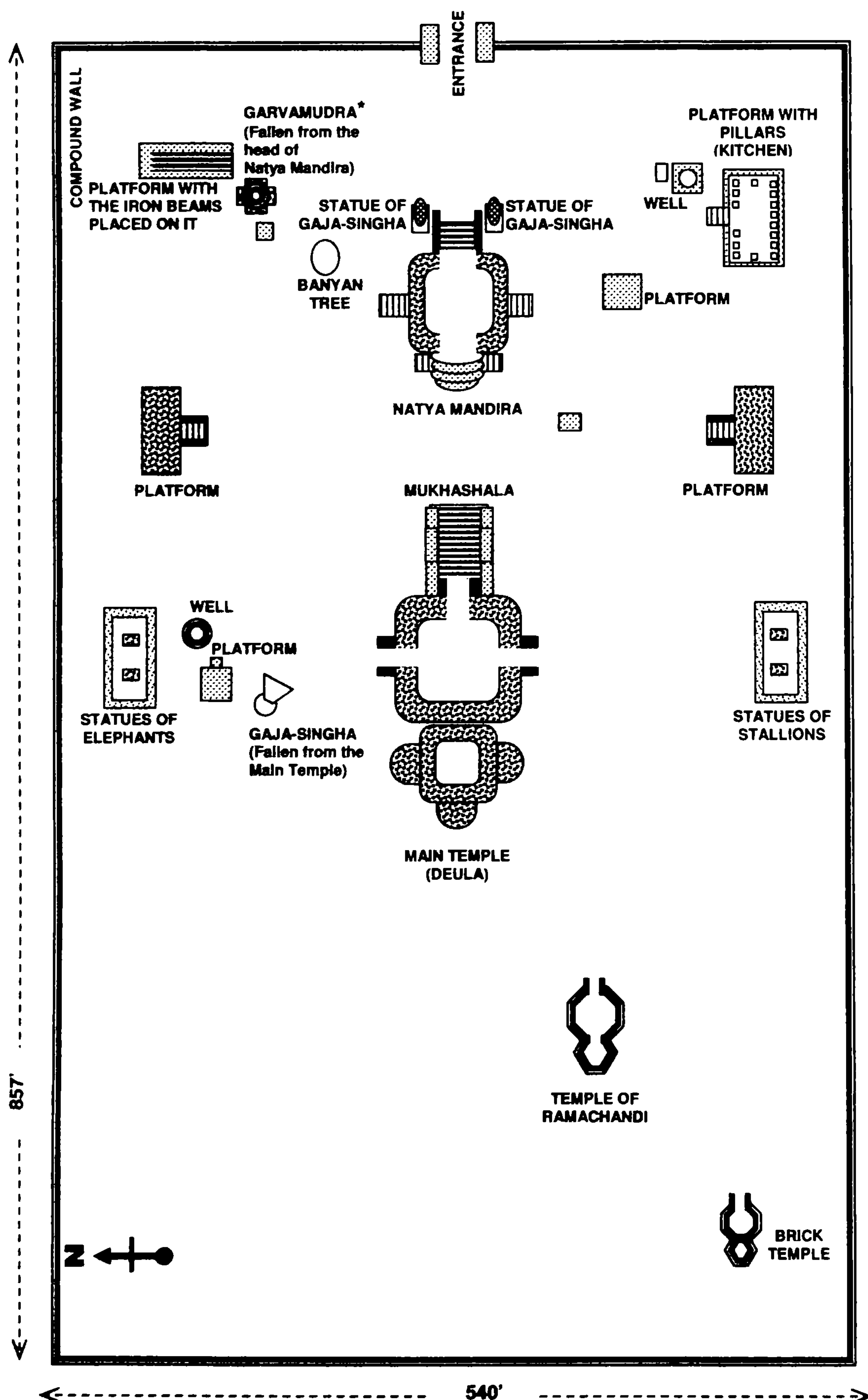
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PERCY BROWN'S VISUALISATION OF KONARKA TEMPLE COMPLEX



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SYMBOLIC PRESENTATION OF THE TEMPLE CAMPUS AS PER DESCRIPTION GIVEN IN THE BOOK



*The present position of Garvamudra is at the north-east side of Natya Mandira near the platform on which the iron beams are kept. It has been relocated and no longer lying at the south-east side of Natya Mandira as stated by Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra in this book.

It is believed that many different structures were built inside the campus of Konarka Temple for different activities and each structure was aligned according to the Shastras or manuals of Vastu, etc. with respect to the temple and also to the geographical directions proper for the structure. For example, the temple kitchen was constructed at the south-east corner of the temple campus.

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THE RUINED KITCHEN OF THE TEMPLE
This structure is described by Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra as a pillared structure supporting a roof in the past'



CLOSE-UP OF RUINED OVENS OF THE KITCHEN



THE WELL NEAR THE KITCHEN OF THE TEMPLE PROVIDED WATER FOR COOKING AND DRINKING

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THE TWO ELEPHANTS ORIGINALLY PLACED AT THE NORTH ENTRANCE OF MUKHASHALA
ARE NOW RELOCATED AT THE NORTH-SIDE OF THE MAIN TEMPLE NEAR THE COMPOUND WALL

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CHAPTER VIII

BEDHA
(THE TEMPLE CAMPUS)

A number of plinths and platforms other than those already described in the previous chapters are found inside the compound of the temple of Konarka. Some of these plinths and platforms or *Peethas* were being used as the bathing pandals *(Snana Mandapa)* for the gods and the goddesses and some had temples built over them. Now it is impossible to identify each and every platform and define the purpose for which they were being used. During my visit to Konarka in the year 1915, I had seen some images of black granite placed on the platform located at the north of the east-side staircase of the *Mukhashala*. Now all these images have been kept in a recently constructed house. Only a few statues made of sand stone are still lying on this platform. Between this platform and the *Natya Mandira*, there is another square platform having sides of 17 feet each. Between this second platform and the *Natya Mandira* there is a very old banyan tree. Under this tree there was a platform which is now in ruins. Near the south side staircase of the *Natya Mandira* there is another platform of square shape. A smaller platform built with bricks of that age and square in shape is also seen in the south direction between the *Mukhashala* and the *Natya Mandira*. To the south of this platform there exists another rectangular platform and also a large size platform in the southeast direction of this one with a number of pillars built on it (Page 143). Perhaps a roof was once supported by these pillars. Some of these pillars are still there. It is unfortunate that nobody could answer any of my questions to help me to identify all these platforms. This way, many sculptural wonders of Konarka have been lost unnoticed and vanished in to the dark hole of time. To the right of *Mukhashala* there is a well, round in shape, having a diameter of 7 feet and 6 inches (P. 143). Even today water from the well is drawn and used. My friends and I tried to console our remorseful souls to some extent by drinking water from this well considering it as a potion from the heaven.

During the rescue operation of Konarka temple a number of images of black granite were found buried under the heaps of sand and stone. During my first visit to Konarka I had seen some of those images placed on the rectangular platform located on the north of *Mukhashala* and some others on the north side veranda of *Natya Mandira*. Two images of *Suryanarayana* were kept leaning to the pillar at the south-east corner of *Natya Mandira*. The way these images were left in the open the corrosive effect of the weather would fast deteriorate them. However, the government has constructed a new brick-cement house on the north-east direction of the *Natya Mandira* and kept all these images there. Some of these images are briefly describe below.

01. The Image of *Surya*, the Sun God - (Page 146)

It has been said earlier in the previous chapter that, the west side *Parshwa Devata* of the main temple of Ramachandi was kept in the *Natya Mandira* during the rescue operation of Konarka conducted in 1906. Bishan Swarup says that this image was installed at the west side of the main temple of Ramachandi. The size of this image is almost equal to that of the other images of *Parshwa Devatas* of the main temple of Ramachandi and its style of construction is identical to that of the west side *Parshwa Devata* of the main temple of Konarka though much smaller in size. Hence, there is no doubt that this image was once placed at the west side *Tala Barandi* of the main temple of Ramachandi. Perhaps, after the temple of Ramachandi collapsed, the priests transferred the image to *Natya Mandira* for the purpose of worship. This year, the image has been relocated to the new brick-cement building constructed by the government.

This image is carved out of marble having an off-white tone. All other images, except this one, are black in colour. The image is carved with an integrated platform. This platform has a channel carved on its side, similar to one found on the throne inside the main temple of Konarka, for the sacred bath water of the deity to flow out. The image of the Sun, along with its associated images, has been placed on this platform. The base of this stone block is built in *Pancharatha* style. On the front of this base seven extremely good-looking and well-decorated horses are carved. At the foot of the Sun, Aruna, the charioteer of the Sun, is sitting holding the reins of all the horses with his left hand and the lash with his right hand.

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SURYA (THE SUN)

On each side of the image of the Sun, inside a *Pidha temple*, a male soldiers stands with a sword in his right hand and a shield with his left hand. Again, on each side, between the soldier and the Sun, a saint or a priest is standing holding a large spatula. The *Pidha* of the temple is located above the head of the soldier. There are two *Sakhi* images carved above the two *Pidhas* at both the sides of the Sun. Above these carvings the space is decorated with creeper and bead string motifs. At the right side a horse mounted soldier in the stance of killing the enemy and at the left a musician playing a *Sitar* (stringed musical instrument) are seen. On each side, between the Sun and the mounted soldier at the right, and between the Sun and the musician at the left, are placed two beautiful lotus flowers in full bloom. The Sun had once holding these two lotus flowers with his hands. The hands of the Sun are now broken beyond his elbows. Above this arrangement, two *Apsaras* are seen in flying state. The image of the Sun is placed under an elegant three-arched canopy *(Torana)* and all these images associated with Sun here are placed below it. A *Kirtimukha* is carved at the top of the canopy.

The Sun wears a very well decorated crown the tip of which touches the canopy. The Sun wears earrings, a six-string necklace with a beautiful locket hanging from the neck down to the middle of his chest, three strings of sacred thread on the shoulder with bells hanging from it. The ornaments are carved as fine as real gold or silver ornaments. An armour of fine mesh, like a protecting vest, is carved from the neck down to the waist and the image wears a four-string waistband having a chain with bells hanging from it and wrapped around the waist. Below

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this chain of bells, are hanging three layers of chains. The decoration on the waistband and on the chains is as fine as the real world ornaments made of gold and silver. At the front portion of the waistband, chains of *Rahumukha* (the face of *Rahu*) are hanging from the waist down to the knee. The knee looks very real and beautiful. The image wears a pair of shoes covering up to the knee level. It seems that, the work on the eyes of the Sun was not completed. The height of the image of the Sun is 4 feet and 10 inches and the piece of the stone along with the Sun and its associated images is 6 feet and 3 inches in height and 3 feet in width.

This image is the best out of all the images seen in Konarka in terms of construction and the expression in its face. It is true that an image is as beautiful as the individual parts of its body. For that matter, it shows the highest point of skill of the sculptors and architects of Konarka. Some are of the opinion that this image was carved originally for installation in the main temple of Konarka as the Sun God. However, this assumption cannot be accepted as this image has been carved with an integrated platform at its bottom whereas a platform already exists on the throne inside the main temple of Konarka on which the image of the Sun God was once installed. Again, if we assume that this image was the original image of the Sun God installed in the main temple, then we will have to assume that the worship of the Sun God started at Konarka only after the present temple was constructed, which is absolutely wrong. It has been said at various places in this book that, the worship of the Sun God has been going on at Konarka since the ancient times, even long before the present temple was constructed there. Hence to assume this image as the presiding deity of Konarka is wrong. In spite of all the evidences indicating otherwise, if it is assumed so, then it would only serves the purpose of satisfying only the ego of the unreasonable dissenters.

02. *Sita Bibaha* (Marriage of *Sita*) -

The plate containing the scene of the marriage of Sita was discovered during the rescue operation of the main temple of Konarka. The scene is divided in to three sections. The top section is carved with the scene of Sita sitting on the lap of his father and Ramachandra, Lakshmana and Dasharatha sitting at their opposite side. In between Rama and Sita a saint holding a large spatula and acting as the priest is making offerings with a conch. Probably, the saint is Bashistha, the traditional family priest of Emperor Dasharatha (The father of Ramachandra). The head and the roof of the plate containing this scene and the heads of Ramachandra and Dasharatha have been damaged.

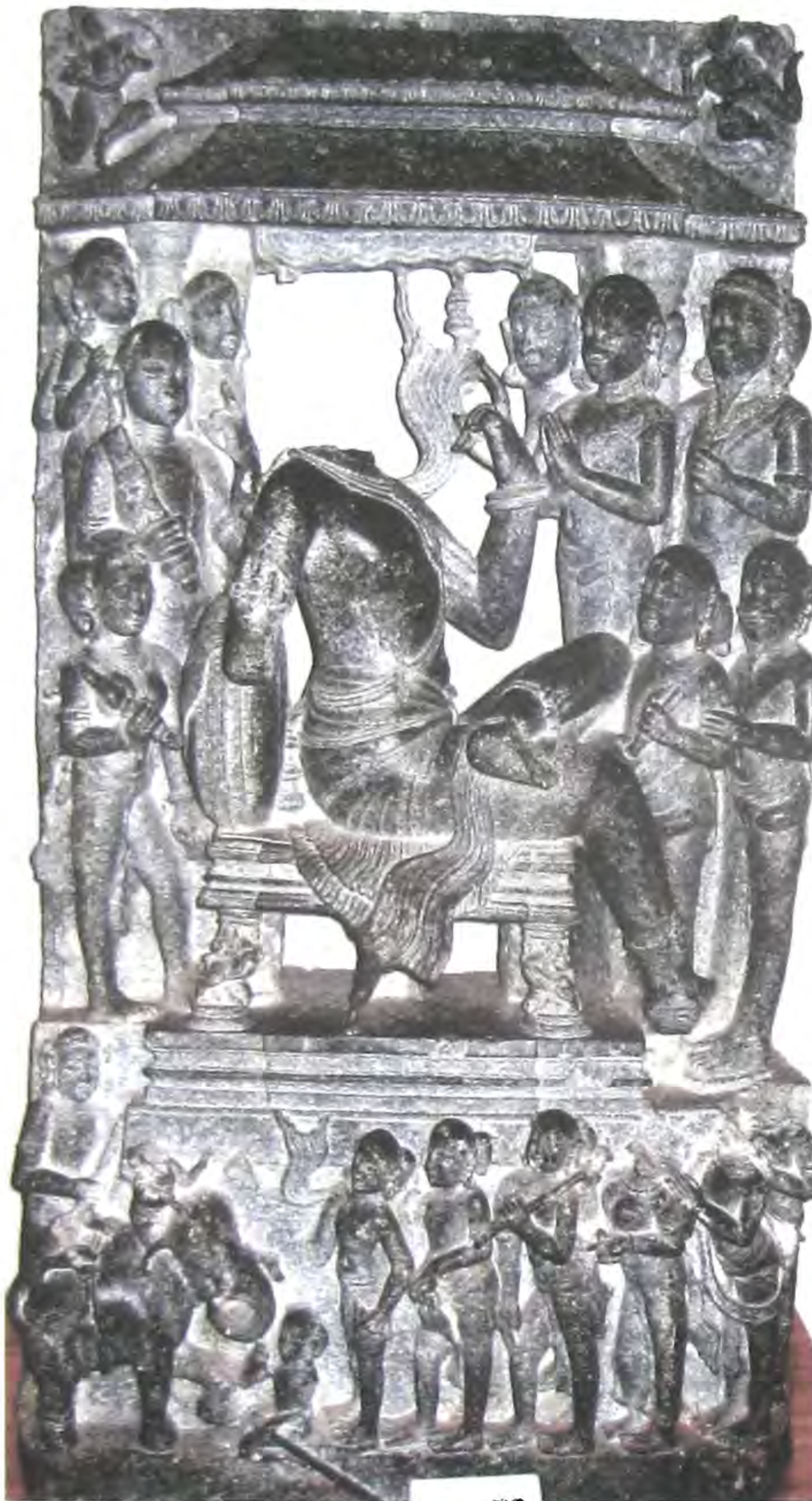


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SITA BIBAHA (THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY OF SITA)

Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra citing the presence of the monkeys identifies this scene as the marriage ceremony of Rama and Sita, though he states that considering the time-frame the presence of the monkeys in the scene is improper. He further states that the sculptor might have done it intentionally for easy identification of the scene by the visitors. Some scholars describe the scene as the marriage ceremony of King Narasingha Deba as he was also being compared by his people with Rama and again he was married to Sita Devi, the daughter of the King of Malwa, Arjuna Deba. However, considering the presence of the monkeys and the reason cited by Pandit Mishra for it, it seems more appropriate to identify the scene as the marriage ceremony of the legendary Rama and Sita of the Hindu epic Ramayana.

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RAJA DARABARA (THE COURT OF THE KING)

Apart from being a great war-hero King Narasingha Deba was also a great patron of art, sculpture, and learning and always enjoyed the company of the learned.

Down below this scene, in the second section, there are four *Sakhi* images, five monkeys, and two *Olta Gaja-Shardula* (backward looking elephant-lion) pillars at both the sides. The *Sakhi* images, probably the companions of Sita, are seen wearing long dresses extending from their necks to the feet and standing in a very happy mood with their hands placed on each others shoulder. The five monkeys at their left side are holding with their hands a pot each. The presence of the monkeys at the time of Sita's marriage shows the lack of the sense of proper time period in the mind of the sculptor. Probably, the sculptor committed this mistake, knowingly or unknowingly, just for its easy identification as the scene of the marriage of Rama and Sita. Many such mistakes have also been committed in their field by famous poets like Shakespeare.

The lowest section is carved with a scene containing a well-decorated elephant and a horse. Four females with musical instruments are seen dancing in various poses in front of them. Two of these females are playing drums; one is blowing a conch and the other a clarinet. The elephants and the horse are looking as beautiful as natural and also lively. Probably it describes the marriage procession of Rama.

03. *Raja Darabara* (Court of the King) –

To the left of the scene of *Sita Bibaha*, there is a scene presenting the court of the King. The scene shows the King sitting on a beautifully decorated bed, spread with a thick mattress and a round pillow placed behind him. In front of the King six persons are standing including a minister. One is explaining his grievances to the King with folded hands. Below the scene are seen five male figures and one female. The heads of three persons here are completely damaged. A mahout riding an elephant and its caretaker standing in front of it with a lash in his hand are seen here. The head of the mahout is broken. On the top, there are two female attendants, one with a fan in her hand and the other holding a garland with both of her hands.

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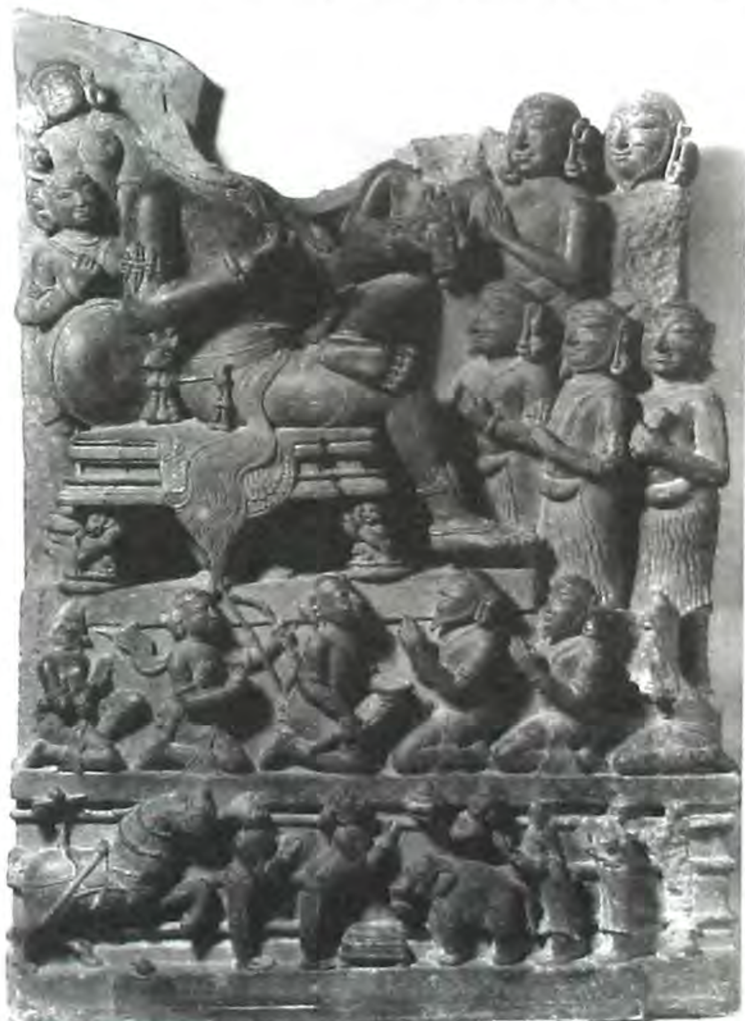
PANCHADEVA (INDRA, BRAHMA, SHIVA, VISHNU AND SURYA)

04. The Image of *Panchadeba* (The Image of the Five Gods) -

The image of *Panchadeba* is carved out of a single stone block. Three out of these five images are easily identified as Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara and the rest two are yet to be identified. Brahma is shown with three faces; probably the fourth face was imagined by the sculptor to have been at the back and hence not carved. Vishnu has been carved with four hands out of which one of the two right side hands is broken, though the lotus flower held by him with this hand is still there. With his other right hand he holds a mace *(Gada)* and with the two left hands, the conch *(Sankha)* and the discus *(Chakra)*. Maheshwara or Shiva has four hands with a snake looped around his shoulder as the sacred thread. The snake is seen with its hood raised at the chest of Maheshwara.

05. The Teaching Scene -

There are three plates carrying the scenes of teaching activity. All these plates are divided in to two sections, the upper section and the lower section. In one of the plates, at the upper level an *Acharya* (teacher or guru) is sitting on a platform with his right leg hanging down and the left leg kept parallel to the ground and bent to keep his left foot on his right thigh. The teacher holds a palm leaf scripture with his left hand and explains the matter to his students with the help of his right hand. The teacher's head is already damaged. Out of all the students, six are standing in front of him, on his right six others are sitting with their knees down and two female students are also sitting at his left. The students belong to all classes of the society like, the kings and the young Brahmins. Bishan Swarup assumes it to be



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THE ACHARYA OR THE GURU ENGAGED IN TEACHING

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a Buddhist scene and identifies the teacher seen here as the Buddha himself. To justify his assumption he says that, among all the ancient gurus only Buddha had royals as his disciples. This opinion of Bishan Swarup will be discussed for its validity later in Chapter XI. On the lower section of this scene, there are two horses, one elephant and a few attendants.

Likewise, there are two other teaching scenes having differences only in the type and the sitting arrangements of the disciples. In these two scenes, at the upper level, four students are sitting in front of the guru with study materials. At the lower level there are five saints, each with a pole and a *Kamandalu* (a small metal water pot having a handle).

06. The King –

The king is sitting on a bed with a mattress and pillows placed on it. Two female attendants are seen with fans in their hands. In front of the king are four people informing the king about certain matters. On the lower level are seen two elephants, two horses and a number of male and female attendants.

07. The Image of the Goddess *Ganga* –

A beautiful image of Goddess Ganga is seen sitting on a crocodile. Ganga is shown here with two hands. However, both of her hands are broken now. She wears a crown and other ornaments which are carved as fine as real gold and silver ornaments. The height of the image is 2 feet and 5 inches and its width is 1 foot and 3 inches.

08. The Sun –

This smaller size image of the Sun, found during the rescue operation of the *Natya Mandira,* was also there along with the image of the Sun described earlier in this chapter. Here, Aruna, the charioteer, is seen sitting in the front at the foot of the Sun with the reins of the seven horses in his hand. The Sun is standing on his feet wearing a very beautiful crown. On each of his sides a soldier is standing with a sword



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THE KING ENGAGED IN A DISCUSSION

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and a shield. This image is different from the other images of the Sun at Konarka. All the other images of the Sun have two arms each, except this one having four arms. Two of the arms holding two lotus flowers in full bloom are broken now, though the lotus flowers only are still there. Out of the rest two hands, the right hand carries a trident and the palm of the left hand is open in blessing mode. Since this image has four hands and one of those carries a trident and another two carry lotus flowers, Dr. Bloch assumes that this image was built to represent Shiva and Surya (Sun) both unified in one image. Though many images are built to represent two gods together, it mostly happens in the case of Hari (Vishnu) and Hara (Shiva) and the unified image is known as Harihara. It does not seem possible to unify Shiva and Sun in one image as it has never been done so before. Bishan Swarup assumes that it is the image of the Sun offering protection and blessings to the universe, as the trident is the symbol of protection and the raised open palm symbolises blessings. The gods and the goddesses quite commonly execute these two activities. The assumption of Bishan Swarup seems more appropriate. Again, the hand of the image holding the trident is at a lower level than the one having open palm in blessing mode. Explaining the fact, Dr. Bloch says that the sculptor had the view that Shiva is less important a god than the Sun and hence he kept the trident at a lower level. It may not be impossible for the sculptor to have such a personal belief, but this belief did not necessarily make him to carve the image this way. For the sake of the sculptural technique the trident is supposed to be placed at the lower level than the lotus just because it makes the image look more beautiful than what it would, had the trident been placed at the upper level. For similar reasons, the mace is placed in the lower hand and the lotus in the upper hand in case of all the Vishnu images (11th Image - Page 154). Considering this fact Bishan Swarup has also not accepted Dr. Bloch's opinion.



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THE FOUR-ARMED SUN

09. ***Shesadeva*** - (Page 152)

Shesadeva wearing a beautiful crown is standing under the hood of a seven-hooded snake. He has two hands. On each of his sides is standing a female attendant. The female figure at the left side is holding a water pot. The female attendant at the right side has broken hands. As per Bishan Swarup it is a Buddhists scene. This assumption of Bishan Swarup, defining the scene as Buddhist in nature, will be discussed in detail later in the Chapter XI of this book.

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SHESADEVA

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10. *Mahishamardini Durga, Jagannatha* and *Shiva* -

This scene has already been mentioned in chapter IV of this Book. Two such scenes are found here. One of them contains two thrones at one side of the stone block. On one of the thrones, Mahisha Mardini Durga is seen riding a lion and severing the head of Mahishasura (the Buffalo Demon), the animal head of the demon lying at the foot of the goddess. Both, Shiva Lingam and Jagannatha are placed on the other throne. In front of them, the King in the attire of a warrior is receiving sacred offerings from a priest. On the lower level are carved a well-decorated elephant and thirteen soldiers. In the other scene, Jagannatha is seen holding a conch in his right hand and another male figure is standing near the priest with an axe in his hand (Page 226). Bishan Swarup assumes the male figure with axe as Parshurama for the basic reason that Parshurama was a Shaiva and he also holds an axe as his favourite weapon.



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KING WORSHIPPING MAHISHAMARDINI DURGA, JAGANNATHA AND SHIVA ON ONE PLATFORM

Finding Shiva, Durga and Jagannatha together at one place, the critics have started to formulate their own theories and getting into arguments in support of their own versions. As Dr. Bloch says, at the time Konarka was being constructed, Shiva and Durga were being worshipped on the same platform along with Jagannatha and not with Balabhadra and Subhadra as is seen today. Later, after the visit of Chaitanya and because of his strong Vaishnav influence, Balabhadra and Subhadra were installed in place of Shiva and Durga. It is not understood what made Dr. Bloch to think this way. From the *Madala Panji* it is known that from the very beginning, since the time of King Indradyumna, the images of Balabhadra and Subhadra were being built along with that of Jagannatha and installed in the temple of Puri. The *Madala Panji* should be taken as one of the main source of information about the events that happened in the temple of Jagannatha, though in other matters of Odisha it is not considered as so genuine by some historians.

Though some say that the *Madala Panji* cannot be fully trusted in case of narration of the ancient events, its records for the period of Chaitanya can definitely be fully trusted. Had such an important change taken place, it would have definitely been recorded in the *Madala Panji*, and also in other scriptures like *Chaitanya Charitamruta*. It would also have been doing rounds till date in the mouths of the people as a legend. Again, in the epics and the scriptures of pre-Chaitanya period, like *Brahma Purana*, etc., there are mentions of Jagannatha, Balabhadra and Subhadra installed together in temples. General Alexander Cunningham says that these three images are represented as the Buddhist Trident. If Cunningham's

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opinion is right, then it can be inferred that these three images were installed together on one platform even many years before the emergence of Chaitanya.

Dr. Bloch again identifies the images of the king and his attendants as the images of the Sun and the other Planet Gods following him. However, there are no such symbols or attributes present in the scene to support Dr. Bloch's opinion. Had the sculptor carved the images of the Sun and other planets here, he would definitely have placed some symbols or attributes for proper identification of the figures as has been done in case of *Mahisha Mardini Durga* by placing the severed head of the Buffalo Demon at her foot. Had the king been the Sun, then the sculptor would definitely have given some indications here. On the contrary, the sculptor has given clear indications through their attires that the images seen here are the images of the king and his attendants. Bishan Swarup also did not accept the opinion of Dr. Bloch, and said that it was the scene of Ramachandra praying before the goddess at Rameshwara. However, there is no satisfactory evidence in support of these facts. The facts rather going against Bishan Swarup's assumption are, it was not possible for Ramachandra to have seen the image of *Jagannatha* as they belong to different *yugas* or periods of time separated by thousands of years. Secondly, as Ramachandra was exiled and sentenced to live twelve years in the forest, it was not possible for him to be present before the goddess in a warrior's attire. He was wandering in the forest in the attire of a saint. Thirdly, it seems impossible for the sculptor to imagine a scene based on so far off a place like Rameshwara than to have based it on events available around him. Rather, it seems that the sculptor had imagined such a scene to show the basic similarities among the Shakta, Shaiva and the Vaishnav sects. There were never any differences among these three sects. Shiva, Durga and Vishnu were never considered by any individual sect as separate gods for their own respective sects only. Rather, they were being considered as one All Mighty God in different names given to them as per their attributes. On the other hand, Bishan Swarup says that there was never an atmosphere of friendliness among the three sects of Shaiva, Shakta and Vaishnav in Odisha. However, it is only a personal opinion of Bishan Swarup and has no historical evidences to support it. Rather, history tells us through many evidences that the followers of various sects were also worshipping the gods and goddesses of the other sects along with those of their own. King Jajati Keshari being a Shaiva had built the Jagannatha temple at Puri. Shankaracharya, being a Shaiva himself, was also worshipping Vishnu, Durga and Ganesha. The builder of Konarka temple, King Narasingha Deba, being a Vaishnav himself was also worshipping other Hindu gods and goddesses like Shiva and Durga. The above-mentioned facts are neither impossible nor require any proof in their support. Whatever the sculptor experienced in his daily life and was practicing himself, he brought to light through his creation. To imagine such a scene and create this piece of sculpture it was not necessary for him to travel so far in India, all the way to Rameshwara. Had it not been a usual practice of the time, he would not have even imagined in his dreams in placing Durga, Shiva and Jagannatha on a single platform.

11. The Image of *Vishnu* –

This image of Vishnu having four hands, holding a conch and a discus *(Chakra)* with his upper two hands, is beautifully carved. On his each side is standing a female figure, one holding a mace and the other holding a lotus flower. The two lower arms of Vishnu rest on the mace and the lotus. Bishan Swarup explains that, the two females represent Vishnu's Shakti (power) of blessings and protection offered to humanity. The hand resting on the lotus symbolises his blessings and the other hand resting on the mace symbolises his protection offered to the humanity. All these images are



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VISHNU

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standing on a lotus platform. The ornaments of Vishnu like, the crown, earrings, necklace, waistband and the linen dress have been very well decorated with fine carvings. Garuda (the bird-headed carrier of Vishnu) is seated at the foot of Vishnu. Above the image is placed a canopy *(Torana)* with three arches, working like a shed, having the image of Brahma at its left side and the Sun sitting on a lotus at the right side. The *Apsaras* are blowing musical instruments like the conch and the clarinet. Bishan Swarup identifies the Sun here as Shiva. However, traditionally, Shiva is never seen seated on a lotus. Again, Aruna, the charioteer of the Sun, seems to be present here. However, it is not possible to clearly identify Aruna in this sculpture. The width of the piece of stone carrying these images is 1 foot and 8 inches and the height of it is 3 feet and 1 inch.

12. The Image of *Nrusingha* –

This scene here shows Nrushingha standing on a lotus flower and tearing off the stomach of Hiranya Kashipu. Here the head of Nrusingha is broken. One female figure is carved on each side of Nrusingha. (Nrusingha is an avatar of Vishnu in half man and half lion appearance, the portion above the waist being that of a lion, incarnated to save his disciple Prahlad from the tyranny of Hiranya Kashipu.)

13. The Image of *Shiva* –

In this scene Mahadeva or Shiva is seen sitting on a tree, wearing a snake as the sacred thread and ornaments on his feet. Shiva is carved here with four arms, though all the arms have broken off the image. He wears a tiger skin wrapped around his waist and a chain of severed human heads at his neck. His hair on the head is tied with a top knot and a crescent moon placed on it.

14. The Show of Skill with Weapons –

In this scene a king is presenting his skill in archery targeting a rock in his front with a bow and arrows. The arrows are seen piercing the rock and their heads coming out at the other end. The expression on the face of the king is beautifully carved showing the joy of his success. Some spectators may be the king's subordinates or family members, standing there with folded hands, are stunned by the skill of the king. The attire of the king including the dress and ornaments are very well sculpted. Below the level of this plate are seen five male soldiers standing with bows, arrows and swords in their hands. A well-decorated horse is standing by with its caretaker present in front of it. Bishan Swarup assumes the image of the king to be that of Buddha before his enlightenment. However, this opinion of Bishan Swarup will be discussed in detail in Chapter XI of this book.



KONARKA MUSEUM

NRUSINGHA
An Avatar of Vishnu



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KING DEMONSTRATING HIS SKILL WITH WEAPONS

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THE KING IN A SWING

The striking resemblance in physical features of all the chlorite images of the King suggests that the sculptors tried to replicate the king in stone. It is further supported by the fact that they had an expert in portraits named Vishwanath Mahapatra in their team of master sculptors.

15. The King in a Swing –

The king is sitting on a swing hung with chains from the pillars supporting a beautiful canopy *(Torana)*. The king is very well decorated with ornaments and has a sword kept by his side. Six female attendants standing to a side are busy swinging the king. Another six female musicians are sitting on a lotus platform singing and playing the musical instruments. According to Bishan Swarup, this is the scene of Srikrishna on the swing. However, it does not seem right as Srikrishna is never seen on the swing with a sword. Rather, looking at the scene, it first comes to the mind that, he is the builder of Konarka temple, King Narasingha Deba, enjoying his leisure time. It is usual for a king to keep a sword by his side always, even during the time he goes to bed and also while enjoying his leisure time. There are many images of the King on the temple of Konarka showing him performing different activities. It is quite possible that, these images are all related to the King Narasingha Deba and not to Srikrishna. It would not be wrong if we assume that, out of devotion to their own King, it was quite natural for the sculptors to have created on the wall of the temple various activities of the King such as enjoying the leisure time, dressed in the attire of a warrior, performing a ritual or worship, etc.

16. The Image of *Agni* (Fire) – (Page 157)

This scene contains the image of Agni (Fire) sitting on a goat with a beard on his face and wearing a sacred thread on his shoulder and a crown on his head. He has a bulging belly and wears various ornaments around his neck and on ears, arms and also on the legs. He is holding a chain of *Rudraksha* beads in his right hand. There are two pots, on both of his sides containing fire with smoke coming out of it. Above the image is a canopy with three arches *(Torana)*. Bishan Swarup identifies this image as that of Jupiter (Bruhaspati). Bishan Swarup is wrong in his assumption. Manomohan Ganguli has rightly identified the image as that of Agni (fire) as fire is seen at both sides of the image. Some assume it to be the image of saint Bibhandaka, though they are wrong, as a saint does not observe a penance or meditate sitting under a beautiful canopy like this.

Practically all the important images of black granite existing in the new building constructed at Konarka have been described in the above paragraphs. Apart from the images described above, some other images of sandstone and the panel of the *Nabagraha* (Chapter VI) are also seen in the campus of Konarka. Additionally there are statues of two huge elephants, two large-size horses and of some other objects present inside the campus of Konarka temple which are worthy of mention here.

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KONARKA MUSEUM

AGNI (FIRE)

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The Statues of Elephants -

At a little distance from the *Mukhashala* and facing it, two huge elephants decorated very well with war outfit are placed on two independent platforms. The chains carved of stone running around the belly of the elephants look so natural that one mistakenly thinks it to be made of iron, as is in the real world. Both the elephants are holding human figures, supposed to be of the enemy camp, with their trunks and many more are crushed below their bellies. These statues of the elephants are badly damaged at many places due to the corrosive action of the weather. The human figures seen below the elephants on the east side are so badly damaged that they are beyond recognition as that of the human beings. The right side ear and the tail of the eastside elephant and both the ears and the tail of the west side elephant are no longer seen as they are completely damaged. The trunk and all the four feet of both the elephants are on the verge of falling apart. Initially they were placed at both the sides of the north side uppermost stairs of the *Mukhashala*. In the year 1881 these elephants were transferred to their present location to avoid damage caused by the stone blocks falling down from the top of the damaged *Mukhashala*. Each elephant is 7 feet in length, 5 feet in width and 7 feet in height.

The Statues of Stallions - (Page 160)

On both sides of the south side uppermost stairs of the *Mukhashala,* were placed two huge statues of stallions. The war-worthy attire of the horses and the restless expression in their faces create fear in the minds of the onlooker. Both the horses look very real and are huge in size. In the year 1881 they were transferred, along with the elephants described above, from their original place to the present location, which is, to the south of the *Mukhashala,* and are placed, like the elephants, on two platforms at a distance equal to that of the two elephants from *Mukhashala*. These horses look so real and natural in appearance that, in spite of being so common a fact for all the sculptures at Konarka, they are considered as a matter of pride for any sculptor of any country in the whole world. The horses measure 10 feet in length, 6 feet in width and 7 feet and 4 inches in height.

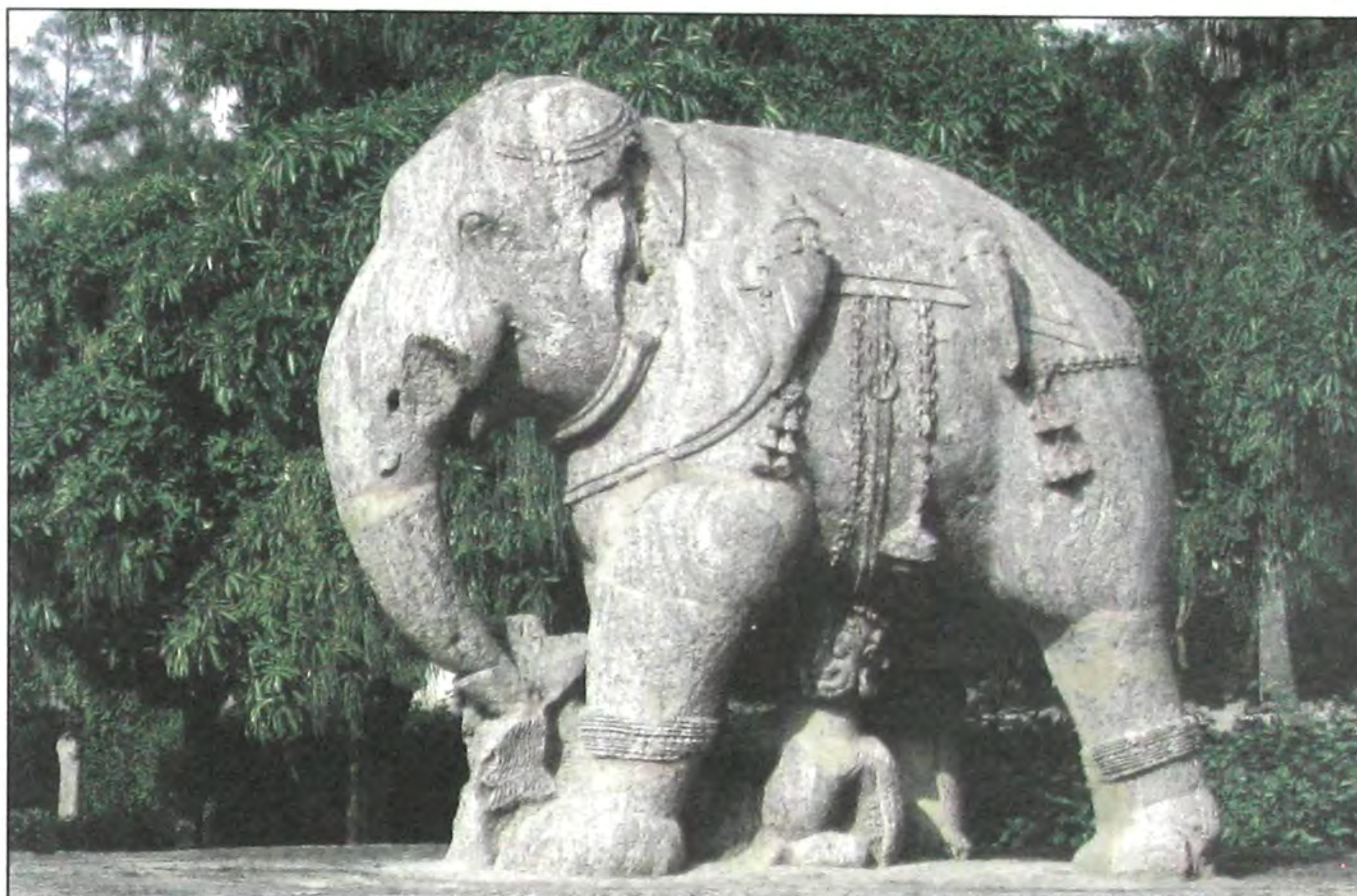
The stallions are decorated with attires worthy of a war field. There is a saddle put on the back of each horse which may serve as an example of extreme sculptural skill even for the sculptors of the modern age. The saddle carries a quiver full of arrows in one side and on the other side is a scabbard with a short sword in it. The neck and the legs are decorated with ornaments. On the left side of the eastside horse and on the right of the north side horse two riders are standing, with the bridle in one hand, a sword with the other and a mace clasped under the arm, in a position ready to kill the enemy. The north side stallion has pounced upon three persons of the enemy side, with one holding a shield stuck under the front leg of the stallion and the other two soldiers pressed under its belly. The front foot of the horse rests on the shield held by this person. The shield carries two images of monitor lizards. The scene creates pity in the mind of the observer for the persons attacked by the horses simply by looking at the expressions created by the sculptors in the faces of these victims. The head and the two hands of the person standing by the eastside horse are missing. The tail, front leg and portion of the neck is also broken and the saddle is fast deteriorating due to the bad effect of the weather. The hind leg has also developed cracks on it. The north side horse is in a comparatively better condition though the head of the rider, the mace at the left side and the sword once held with the right hand are all broken.

The visitors feel pain in their hearts looking at the way the horses and the elephants are damaged. The government should take immediate action to build some kind of roof over these sculptures to protect them from the hazards of the sun and the rain. Otherwise, within a few years, these valuable and wonderful pieces of sculpture will sustain more severe and permanent damages.

Gaja-Singha - (Page 161)

At the north side of the once existing main temple of Konarka, on the ground, lies a giant *Gaja-Singha* image. It was placed at the *Raha Paga* of the east-side *Rekha* portion of the main temple just above the *Mukhashala* at a height of about 170 feet above the ground level. It was built out of two huge blocks of stone. Now the *Gaja-Singha* image is lying on the ground in three pieces after it fell down from its position. The height of the image from the top of the head of the lion *(Singha)* to the bottom of the feet of the elephant *(Gaja)* is 20 feet. The length of the platform under the feet of the elephant is 15 feet out of which 8 feet was inside the main temple wall and the rest 7 feet was projecting outside. The width of this complete sculpture was 5 feet.

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ONE OF THE TWO ELEPHANTS INSTALLED AT THE NORTH SIDE OF THE TEMPLE



THE OTHER ELEPHANT INSTALLED AT THE NORTH SIDE OF THE TEMPLE

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ONE OF THE TWO STALLIONS INSTALLED AT THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE TEMPLE



THE OTHER STALLION INSTALLED AT THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE TEMPLE

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GAJA-SINGHA

The portion of it projecting outside the temple wall weighing around 45 Tons was once placed on the wall of the main temple at a height of 170 feet above the ground. On its fall from the temple it damaged the Pidha of Mukhashala and now is lying here on the ground in three pieces.



A LION

It probably belongs to the Mastaka (Head) of the Main Temple or to the temple of Ramachandi

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KONARKA MUSEUM
VATUKA VAIRAV


KONARKA MUSEUM
VAMANA AVATARA


KONARKA MUSEUM
YAMA


KONARKA MUSEUM
VARAHA AVATARA

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IRON BEAMS

Iron Beams -

A number of iron beams are lying in the campus of Konarka. Some of these beams are now damaged due to the harsh effect of the weather. All the beams are gradually deteriorating due to corrosion induced by the humidity and salinity of the atmosphere. Such beams are not made any more. Hence, it would be wise to keep these beams with a protective coat of paint applied to them.



CROSS-SECTION OF THE IRON BEAMS

The gaps seen here are created by molten iron not reaching all the places uniformly over and around the constituent smaller plates, stacked together and placed side by side to manufacture the beams of desired size and shape.

Boundary Wall -- (Page 141 & 142)

The campus of Konarka was surrounded with a boundary wall from all sides. As per Abul Fazl, the height of the boundary wall was around 150 cubits (approximately 225 feet) and its thickness was 19 cubits (approximately 28½ feet). However, on examining the surviving portion of the compound wall it seems that Abul Fazl's description was absolutely imaginary. Now the compound wall exists at all sides maintaining a much smaller height. The height of the compound wall is now measured to be 14 feet and of thickness 5 feet and 4 inches. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra mentions that the height and thickness of the compound wall were 25 feet and 7 feet or 8 feet respectively. The existing length of the compound wall is 857 feet in the east-west direction and 540 feet in the north-south direction. Hence, the area of the campus is 4, 62, 780 square feet or approximately 11 acres which is 1 acre more than that of the Jagannatha temple in Puri.*

There was a gate at the east side of the compound wall. Now only the remnants of the gate exist. There were no other gates at any other side. The three doorways of the *Mukhashala* were wrongly described by Abul Fazl as the three gates of the compound wall. This shows that Abul Fazl's description about Konarka was not authentic. There are four doorways in the compound wall of Puri temple, but the temple of Lingaraja in Bhubaneswar has only three doorways as there is no entrance at the west side of the compound wall. It is not known how many entrances were there on the compound wall of Konarka temple. There now exists only an opening of 6 feet and 7 inches wide on the east side of the compound wall. Probably there once existed a *Pidha* temple acting as the entrance to the temple premises. The temples in the campus of Konarka and the main temple were built in such a manner that soon after the Sun rises on the seaside, its first rays travelling through the eastern door of the

***FOOT NOTE**: The Puri temple campus is 665 feet long and 640 feet wide having an area of 425, 600 square feet.

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compound wall, *Natya Mandira* and the *Mukhashala* used to fall straight on the head of the Sun God in the main temple. There are no such arrangements at the temples of Bhubaneswar and Puri for the rays of the rising sun to enter the main temple. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra says that, the top layer of the compound wall was built with pieces of stones cut in the shape of flat and thick domes and behind these stones a wide veranda was running all through the length of the compound wall. The soldiers used to provide security to the temple stationed on this veranda. He had seen some of these stone pieces lying on the ground and some other pieces still attached to the compound wall. There is no trace of these dome shaped stones now. As per a legend, towards the end of the 18th Century AD, at the time of renovation of Puri temple, these stone pieces were carried away from Konarka and used in construction of the top portion of the eastern and the southern side compound walls of Puri temple. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra believes in this legend and says that the few stone pieces he had seen at Konarka are similar in size and shape to the pieces of stone used in construction of the east and the south side compound wall of Puri temple. The stone blocks used for construction of these two sides of the compound wall are much bigger in size and look newer than those used for the north and west side compound wall of the temple in Puri.[1]

Aruna Pillar – (Page 32 & 33)

There was a pillar in front of the main temple of Konarka known as Aruna Stambha (Aruna Pillar). The pillar was later transferred from Konarka and installed in front of the Lions' Gate of the Jagannatha temple in Puri. The height of this pillar is 34 feet which has been described by Abul Fazl as 150 feet high. Abul Fazl's description seems to be unreal. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra's description is given below[2] –

"In front of the eastern gateway there is an artistic ornament of marked elegance and great beauty. It is a monolithic pillar of chlorite, set on an exquisite pedestal of the same material. Its pedestal is 7 feet 9 inches square and 6 feet high, the base tile being 1 foot and the plinth over it 5 feet. The former is plain and the latter is formed with two tiles with an ornament somewhat resembling a taros, but its edge is flattened instead of being rounded, and over it there is another series of tiles *(Pada, Kani, Basanta* and *Padma)*. The carvings on these are of the most sumptuous description, the like of which are to be seen nowhere else in India; as a piece of artwork they are fit to be compared with the best specimens of the kind in any part of the country. The pillar at first sight appears like a fluted column, but has not a round shaft with flutes cut on it. The design was the square; but the angles were repeatedly cut, so as to produce a sixteen-sided polygonal column.* It measures from the top of the plinth to the bottom of the capital twenty-five feet and two inches. It has a diameter of 2 feet and a circumference of 6 feet 3 ½ inches. The capital is formed of two rings surmounted by a series of lotus petals, and covered over by a square tile having two receding tiles over it. The height of this capital is 2 feet 6 inches, and the whole is capped by the figure of a monkey squatting. The measurements give a total height, from the ground to the top of the capital, of 33 feet 8 inches."



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GRAHA IMAGES – RAHU AND KETU
Rahu holding the Moon and the Sun and Ketu a dagger

Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra has wrongly described Aruna as a monkey. Aruna is the charioteer of the Sun God and he is sitting atop the pillar in front of his master and praying to him with folded hands. For this reason the name of the pillar is Aruna Stambha or Aruna Pillar.

1. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra– Antiquities of Orissa – Vol II. – P. 149, P. 113
2. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra– Antiquities of Orissa – Vol II. – P. 113.

*FOOT NOTE: The name of a pillar is given as per the number of sides it has. A square shaped pillar is named *Brahmakanda*, a pentagon shaped pillar is known as *Shivakanda*, a hexagonal pillar is known as *Skandakanda*, an octagonal pillar is known as *Vishnukanda* and a sixteen-sided pillar is known as *Rudrakanda*. The *Aruna Stambha* is a *Rudrakanda* Pillar

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CHAPTER IX

TIME OF CONSTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE

Different historians usually express different opinions while determining the starting time of any ancient institution. It is rarely seen that two historians agree to one opinion given on the subject. Even though the year of construction and the names of the builders of the temples at Puri and Bhubaneswar are well known to everybody, the writers do not feel shy to put forwards their individual and different opinions regarding the matter and then try hard to prove their point. The modern historians consider the legends as imaginary and insane, and the descriptions of the events stated in *Madala Panji* as exaggerated and based on the personal whims of its writer. In this situation, the only references spared and could be used for the purpose are the inscriptions recorded on copper plates, stone slabs or on any other media by the then administrators. The reason for which the *Madala Panji* is not considered as a reliable source by the modern historians, for the same reason the records of the administrators might also be unsuitable for writing the history for they might have also been doctored by the personal fantasy of their creators just to present a larger than life situation. It is also seen that the administration at different times or different administrations at a particular time opposing each other in making statements and venting out different versions. Under such circumstances, where do we find the references for writing our history? The opinions of scholars of the history of Odisha are quite different from each other as they do not accept the traditional sources of historical references as genuine and hence do not use them to discover and document our past. Rather, driven by their own imagination, taste and assumptions, they try to rewrite history. Practically, they do not write history, they rather create it. This created history causes more harm to our society than good.

The nations, which record their history chronologically on regular basis, do not face such problems and such created history is not found in their case. But, for a country which does not follow such practices, and where the entire culture has been continuously running on and transferred from generation to generation through exchange of minds and speech among its people, to write its history, the historians have to depend on the legends and the chronicles of the time. The acceptance of the Buddhist chronicle *Dathavansa* of Ceylon as a genuine source and the *Madala Panji* of Odisha as a fake one is not at all healthy for the historians of Odisha. For the purpose, the *Madala Panji* should be considered as reliable as the *Dathavansa* of Ceylon. Of course, there may be mistakes in these records due to negligence of the writers, but that does not make the entire *Madala Panji* a fake document. At the same time, like Professor Geyser, it is also dangerous to consider *Dathavansa* as a completely genuine record. To dig the truth out, it is necessary to discuss and analyse the ancient scriptures and the epics critically. All the events and their descriptions given there are weighed carefully with regard to the content of truth in them. Initially, all the sources, from the legends to the records of different administrations, are to be given equal importance and then examined for retrieval of the portion of truth contained in them. The time of construction of the temple at Konarka has been mentioned in various forms in different scriptures, right from the *Madala Panji* to the legends still doing rounds among the people. The names like Shibei Santara and Langula Narasingha Deba, and the legends associated with the construction of Konarka temple are known to everybody, from the child to the old ones, in each and every home in Odisha. Still then, the writers do not hesitate to express their different and independent opinion regarding the time the construction of the temple at Konarka was started or completed.

It is necessary to know about and analyse the facts stated in *Madala Panji* before discussing the various opinions regarding the time of construction of the temple of Konarka.

It is stated in *Madala Panji* –

"Mitraditya Surya (the Sun God), was installed in a temple at Chandrabhaga in Konarka since the day Shamba left for Dwaraka after he was free from the curse and cured of the disease of leprosy. After that, for many ages the kings and the emperors continued to worship the Sun God there. In *Kaliyuga*, after the rule of many kings over the land, out of forty-four rulers of the Keshari dynasty, the thirtieth King, Purandara Keshari built a temple at the place and installed eight villages for the Brahmins to facilitate continued worship of the Sun God. Then, after many years, the Ganga Emperor Anangabhima Deba built a temple for Lord *Jagannatha* with a promise to make

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it much bigger than the temple existing in Puri at the time. However, the temple could not be made as big as he wished. Hence, as a corrective measure, to mitigate the sin committed by his father by not executing his vow properly, the Crown Prince Langula Narasingha Deba wished to build a temple on the gorge of Padmatola in front of the badly deteriorated sun temple built in the past by Emperor Purandara Keshari. He gave the responsibility of supervising the construction of the temple to his Second Minister, Shiba Samantaray Mohapatra, popularly known as Shibei Santara. After the construction of the temple was completed and consecrated, the image of the Sun God was transferred from the old temple built by Purandara Keshari and installed in the new temple."

This way, like the temple of Jagannatha in Puri, the Sun Temple at Konarka was also built many times replacing its previous and deteriorated ones, over and over again.

Regarding the construction of this temple *Madala Panji* describes –

Verses written in Odia language –(Transliterated version)–

Ihanka Uttaru Ihanku Polanguliya Narasinghadeba Vogaban 45 Barsha – Shakabda 1204 - A Raja Arkakshetrare
Konarka Debanku Deula Tolaile – A Rajara Mudaka – Writings from *Madala Panji* - (Appendix-II, Sl. No. 19)

Verses written in Sanskrit language – (Transliterated version)–

Sapuchha Narasinghena Kshmeshwarenamshumalinah
Prasadah Karito Rajna Shake Dwadashake Shate – Writings from *Madala Panji* - (Appendix-II, Sl. No. 20)

The above statement made in*Madala Panji* means –

"After the rule of Anangabhima Deba his son Langula Narasingha Deba ruled for forty-five years up to Shakabda 1204 or 1282 AD. He built a temple at Arkakshetra (Konarka) for Konarka Deba (the Sun God). It was written under the signature seal of the King that, the temple of Anshumali (the Sun) was built by the Master of the World Langula Narasingha Deba in Shakabda 1200 or the year 1278 AD."

Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra and Dr. Hunter have agreed to the statement made in *Madala Panji* and consider it as true. However, Sterling says that, the present temple at Konarka was built in the year 1241 AD by King Langula Narasingha Deba,[1] though Sterling has proved himself wrong[2] by his own statement that says, Langula Narasingha Deba ascended the throne in the year 1236 AD. As per his statement the construction of Konarka was completed in the year 1241 AD. It means that the construction was completed within only five years of his reign, and that too, had it been started soon after the King ascended the throne in the year 1236 AD. However, it is quite impossible to complete a temple like Konarka within a period of five years. Hence, in that case, it may be inferred that the temple was completed later and not in the year 1241 AD.

As per *Madala Panji*, Langula Narasingha Deba ascended the throne in the year 1237 AD.

Manomohan Chakrabarty has published certain articles in the journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society regarding the time period of rule by different kings of Odisha. The writer of the Gazetteer of Puri, who heavily depended on the articles of Manomohan Chakrabarty as reference, says that Narasingha Deba-I or Langula Narasingha Deba ascended the throne in the year 1238 AD or Shakabda 1160.[3] Sterling, basing on two books, *Rajacharitra* and *Banshabali*, has written that Chodaganga Deba ascended the throne of Odisha in *Shakabda* 1054, on the 13th day of the month of *Ashwina* (September – October).[4] The calculation also proves that Narasingha Deba started to rule in the year 1237 AD. Hence, regarding the rule of King Narasingha Deba, *Madala Panji* can be considered as true and reliable.

Nagendra Nath Basu received some copper plate inscriptions of Narasingha Deba-II from a *Jamindar* or land-lord of Kendupatana in Cuttack and published the contents describing the period of rule of the Ganga Kings up to Narasingha Deba-II in the Journal of the Asiatic society of Bengal.[5] The information contained in the copper

1. Andrew Sterling – History of Orissa – P. 129
2. Ibid – P. 93
3. Manomohan Chakrabarty – Eastern Ganga Kings of Orissa - Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal – Vol. 72, 1903
4. Andrew Sterling - History of Orissa – P.89
5. Nagendra Nath Basu - Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal–Vol. LXV–Part I–No.3–1896–P. 229

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plates was also published in *Mukur* and it differs with the matter stated in *Madala Panji*. As per these copper plate inscriptions, Narasingha Deba-I or Langula Narasingha Deba ascended the throne in Shakabda 1175 or in the year 1253 AD. Now, which one of these two statements is right? Is it what it is in *Madala Panji* or the fact stated in the recovered copper plate inscriptions? It needs to be decided.

As per the copper plate inscriptions, King Chodaganga Deba ascended the throne of Odisha in Shakabda 994 or in the year 1072 AD. Sterling, who based his opinions heavily on the *Rajcharitra* of *Madala Panji*, a Sanskrit scripture named *Banshabali* and on some other proofs, says that, in a battle fought in Shakabda 1054, on the 13th day of the month of *Ashwina* (September - October) Chodaganga Deba occupied Cuttack. Since so many documents point towards only one date, it cannot be ignored and the time mentioned only on a copper plate inscription and without any other supporting proof be accepted as true. There is no evidence to prove that, the copper plate inscription was a contemporary record of the time and the *Madala Panji* was not. Again, as some historians say, "*Madala Panji* contains unreal facts," the same way the copper plate inscriptions may also contain exaggerated or twisted facts. As per the 32nd *Shloka* (stanza) of the copper plate inscription Chodaganga Deba ruled over Odisha for seventy years. On the contrary, in *Madala Panji* and also in *Banshabali*, this figure[1] is stated to be only twenty years. Chodaganga Deba was ruling in his own country and after he was quite grown up, he invaded and occupied Odisha. Had Chodaganga ruled over Odisha for 70 years, then he would have had invaded the state and won the war in his childhood days, which seems impossible for a powerful kingdom like Odisha. Again, as per the world records, Louis IV was the king who ruled for the longest period of 72 years and it was possible only because Louis IV ascended the throne of France in his childhood. Hence, the information given in the copper plate does not seem to be practical and true. Even if Chodaganga Deba's rule is accepted to be of 70 years, there is still a serious mistake in the information stated in the copper plate inscription. It is written at the beginning of the inscription that, Narasingha Deba-II, as on *Shakabda* 1217, at his 21st *Anka* (year of rule), had already ruled for 17 years. The statement is made in the 37th *Shloka* (Stanza) -

Verses written in Sanskrit language - (Transliterated version)-

"*Bedarttubyomachandrapramita*"-Copper Plate Inscription of Narasingha Deba -II-(Appendix - II, Sl. No. 21)

It means Kamarnaba ascended the throne in Shakabda1064.

The period of rule by Kamarnaba and the other kings are stated below -

The Ruler (Name)	Time Period (Years)	Number of Stanza (*Shloka*)
Kamarnaba	10	43
Sriraghaba	15	52
Rajraj-I	25	58
Aniyanka Bhimadeba (I)	10	36
Rajraj-II	17	70
Anangabhima Deba-I	34	80
Narasingha Deba-I	33	88
Bhanu Deba	18	95
Narasingha Deba-II	17	
Total Number of Years	179	

(The inscription of Narasingha Deba-II was written in the 17th year of his rule)

1. As per the calculation of Dr. William Wilson Hunter and Andrew Sterling

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Kamarnaba took over the rule in Shakabda 1064. Hence, the 21st year of the rule of Narasingha Deba falls on Shakabda 1243. However, the copper plate inscription states it to be Shakabda 1217, which is less by 26 years. Now, in this situation, if we consider *Madala Panji* as an unreliable source in the matter of determining the period of rule by different rulers, it also may be inferred that these copper plate inscriptions are even much more unreliable for the purpose. The statement in *Mukur* that, "these inscriptions are a better alternative to *Madala Panji*", cannot be so confidently accepted.[1]

Regarding construction of the temple at Konarka, all the other evidences point to a similar time excepting these copper plate inscriptions. Under the signature seal of King Narasingha Deba-II, it is written in *Madala Panji* that, the temple of Konarka was built by Langula Narasingha Deba in Shakabda 1200 or the year 1278 AD. Hence, these copper plate inscriptions cannot be believed to be true in this respect, and the *Madala Panji* has to be taken in to confidence, until and unless, a better source of information is available.

Apart from the *Madala Panji*, the first historical evidence regarding Konarka is available in *Ain-i-Akabari* written by Abul Fazl the contents of which concerning Konarka has already been descried earlier.

Abul Fazl writes in *Ain-i-Akbari* -"It is said that, around 730 years ago King Narasingha Deba constructed this temple."

Abul Fazl visited Odisha in the year 1580. The year 730 years before his visit was (1580 - 730 =850) the year 850 AD. However, there was no King in the name of Narasingha Deba ruling Odisha during this period. Hence, it is clear that Abul Fazl depended completely on the informationhe received from his reporters and did not even visit Konarka personally. However, the historians, basing on his wrong statement, have promulgated two separate theories about the period of rule by the kings of Odisha. Some believe in Abul Fazl's writing that states Konarka was built 730 years before his visit, and infer that probably it was built in 850 AD by some other king of Keshari dynasty and not by Narasingha Deba whose name has only been wrongly mentioned in this respect. The other group, believing in the *Madala Panji* to be true says that, King Langula Narasingha Deba built the temple at Konarka and the year mentioned by Abul Fazl, that is, '730 years before his visit' is definitely wrong. It is now necessary to analyse both the opinions and bring to light only the relevant one. While analysing, it should be remembered that many facts described by Abul Fazl in his book *Ain-i-Akbari* are not true. For example, as described by him, the compound wall of Konarka temple was neither 150 cubits in height (225 feet) nor 19 cubits (28 feet and 6 inches) thick. There were no elephants installed on the eastern doorway or horse riders at the western doorway and the Aruna Stambha (ArunaPillar) was not 100 cubits (150 feet) in height. While writing about Konarka, Abul Fazl did not bother to verify the truth in the information he collected from his reporters. He went on writing in his book whatever he heard from his informers and the people around him. Hence, *Ain-i-Akbari* cannot be considered as a genuine source for enumerating the real history of Konarka.

Fergusson seems to have believed in the statement of Abul Fazl regarding Konarka being built 730 years before his visit to Odisha. Based on Abul Fazl'sverdict he also determined his version of the 'Development Cycle of Sculptural Architecture in Odisha'. Fergusson explains that, the sculptural art in Bhubaneswar temple is quite developed, at the temple of Konarka it is extremely beautiful showing the peak of its development, and that of the temple at Puri is quite underdeveloped in comparison to these two. He further says that, the curve showing the development cycle of the temple architecture in Odisha moving upwards arrived at a matured point with the construction of the temple of Bhubaneswar, then moved further up to its peak with the construction of the temple of Konarka, and finally turned to move downward to reach a point substantially at a lower level when the temple of Puri was constructed and kept moving downward after that. Hence, as per Fergusson, the Bhubaneswar temple was built first with mature sculptural skill, then the temple of Konarka was built with the highest quality of sculpture and lastly the temple of Puri was constructed, long after construction of the temple of Konarka, with inferior sculptural work. He determines time of construction of Konarka temple as the 9th Century AD, that is, long before the construction of the temple at Puri.

The statement made by Fergusson is not backed by evidences. Firstly, it is very difficult to prove that the decorative sculptural architecture of Puri temple is of lower quality than that of the temple at Bhubaneswar. All the sculptural work on the temple of Puri has been covered with a thick layer of lime plaster and it is not possible to examine them now. However, looking at the style of its construction and the relative proportions with which

1. Mukur–Part IV–P. 121

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its different sections are built, the temple of Puri seems no way inferior to the temple at Bhubaneswar. Rather, the construction style of the Puri temple looks much better than that of the temple at Bhubaneswar. Critics of ancient architecture like Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra[1] have also disagreed to confirm that the architecture of Puri temple is inferior to the standard of the temple at Bhubaneswar. Even if we agree to the point raised by Fergusson that the architecture at Puri temple is of low quality, it would not be proper to describe or determine the construction time of the temples basing only on the development cycle of the temple architecture in Orissa. The present-day philosophers are in trouble finding solutions for the historical problems by the theory of evolution and development promulgated by them. The philosophy behind the theory of evolution and development has not yet been accepted as the ultimate truth. In this situation, rejecting the descriptions given in *Madala Panji* and inferring that Konarka was built earlier to Puri temple, based on the wrongly determined development cycle of the temple architecture in Odisha, is quite an irresponsible act and is detrimental and dangerous to the real history of Odisha. Bishan Swarup dedicates a very lengthy chapter in his book to determine the time of construction of the temple at Konarka.[2] In this chapter first he tries to prove that the writings in *Madala Panji* were imaginary and not based on true events. At the beginning of the chapter he says that, all the events described in *Madala Panji* could not be assessed as true. People think that it is not written in the style of the language that was contemporary to the period. He further says that, Kalapahada destroyed the *Madala Panji* by setting it to fire. After he left, somebody tried to recreate the *Madala Panji* while leaning comfortably against the wall at the corner of a room and simply imagining the events described in it. Hence, in his opinion, it is useless to depend on *Madala Panji* to write the true history of Odisha. Of course, there might be some imaginary and improper descriptions in *Madala Panji*. Had Kalapahada actually burnt the *Madala Panji* and the *Madala Panji* exists today, then it must have been rewritten. Again, considering the fact that it is quite natural for a writer to be carried away by his taste and mood while writing about an event and even incorporate certain modifications to the actual happenings to suite his taste, it could be quite possible for its newer version to be a bit different at places in comparison to the original.* *Madala Panji* might have certain defects like it, but that does not mean that it is baseless and represents only untrue events making it completely useless as a reference for writing the history of Odisha. Abul Fazl visited Odisha long after the invasion of Kalapahada. His opinion regarding the construction time of Konarka, that is, 730 years before his visit, was not based on any research conducted by him. He wrote just what he heard from the people's report and without examining their statements for accuracy or for the authenticity of their sources. Bishan Swarup, thinking that the translation made by Gladwin was wrong, had referred to the description of Konarka in the original *Ain-i-Akbari* written by Abul Fazl and made his own translation for publication in his book. His translation also contains words and phrases like "They say", for example, "They say, Konarka was built 730 years ago." Hence, the way it is believed that, the people got themselves engaged in recreating *Madala Panji* after Kalapahada left Odisha, in the same way, some people provided fabricated information to Abul Fazl to write about Konarka. Then why should we think that Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari* is absolutely right and *Madala Panji* is absolutely wrong?

This way Bishan Swarup has set aside the *Madala Panji* and accepted Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari* as a reliable source for writing the history of Odisha. He says that, the writing of Abul Fazl about the construction time of Konarka temple, that is, '730 years before his visit' is right, but the information stating 'the builder of the temple was King Langula Narasingha Deba'is wrong. He further says that, the people who informed Abul Fazl about the time of its construction had wrongly informed him about the name of its builder as no king of Keshari dynasty in the name Narasingha Deba existed at the time. However, a ruler of only the Keshari dynasty had constructed the temple. To find the name of the King who built the temple at Konarka, Bishan Swarup takes the help of *Madala Panji* to find the duration of rule by different rulers and then that of *Ain-i-Akbari* for the time period of their rule. In this way he infers that Purandara Keshari had built the temple of Konarka. Purandara Keshari was the 30th of the 44 rulers of Keshari dynasty and there are no such relevant writings concerning his period of rule. The Keshari rulers ruled over Odisha for 670 years until Chodaganga Deba invaded and defeated the Keshari in the year 1100 AD. Hence, in the year 870 AD (1100 AD – 230 years) Purandara might have been ruling over Odisha which is approximately the year (850 AD) mentioned by Abul Fazl in *Ain-i-Akbari*.

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1. "I shall say nothing about the absence of grace as it is an intangible quantity, dependent a good deal upon fancy, and I must in that respect yield to the learned archaeologist, though it would not be amiss to ask, how far that absence is due to the covering up the details, and how much to want of taste in the architect."........ - Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra– Antiquities of Orissa – Vol II. – P. 11

2. BishanSwarup – Konark – Chapter X

*FOOT NOTE: There is no proof to support that Kalapahada had burnt the *Madala Panji*. He had looted the temple only. Again, *Madala Panji* is not stored in the temple premises. It is always kept in the house of its writer, *Deula Karana* or the Clerk of the Temple.

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The strength of the reasoning put forth by Bishan Swarup seems to be falling apart. Bishan Swarup says that, the informer to Abul Fazl had told him the correct year of construction of the temple at Konarka but was wrong with regard to the name of the builder. It sounds completely absurd, as it is quite natural to forget the date the temple was built rather than the name of the person who built it. For example, even today the name of King Indradyumna who built the temple of Jagannatha at Puri is still on the tip of the tongue of the people, but how many people remember the date Lord Jagannatha was installed in that temple? Hence, Abul Fazl's statement about Narasingha Deba building the temple of Konarka can be considered as true with much more confidence than the other statement regarding the time of construction, that is, 'Konarka was built 730 years before his visit to Orissa.' Again, from where did Bishan Swarup know about Purandara Keshari building the temple of Konarka? He has not mentioned about it. However, as a matter of fact, it is not stated anywhere else except in *Madala Panji*. Hence, as per Bishan Swarup, the statement made in *Madala Panji* that 'Purandara Keshari built the Sun temple at Konarka' is true, and at the same time, the statements further made in *Madala Panji* that 'Narasingha Deba built the present temple at Konarka after finding the earlier Sun temple built by Purandara Keshari in ruins,' is not true. According to Bishan Swarup the facts described in *Madala Panji* like, 'Purandara was the 30th ruler of the 44 rulers of Keshari dynasty', 'the Keshari dynasty ruled over Odisha for 670 years', etc. are all very true and acceptable, but for the misfortune of King Langula Narasingha Deba, the particular information stated in *Madala Panji* confirming him as the builder of Konarka temple cannot be accepted.

Secondly, if *Madala Panji* has rightly described that there were 44 rulers of the Keshari dynasty ruling for 670 years in Odisha, why the time stated there about the invasion of Chodaganga Deba be untrue and imaginary? On what basis and proof Bishan Swarup considered the facts stated in *Madala Panji* as untrue and arrived at the year 1100 AD? Is it definite that deducting 230 years from the year that gets us to the year Abul Fazl wrote about Konarka was the year Chodaganga Deba was ruling over Odisha? The time stated in *Madala Panji* is right and its statement regarding its builder is completely untrue? Again, how did Bishan Swarup know that the later 14 rulers of Keshari dynasty ruled for 230 years? On dividing 670 years with 44 rulers, each ruler gets 16 years to rule and the rest 6 is left as remainder. Hence, for the 14 rulers (16 years x 14 rulers =) 224 years are allotted and adding the remainder of 6 years to it one arrives at the required figure of 230. It is quite interesting to observe, though such kind of arrangement is never seen in any country regarding the period of rule by its different rulers. However, such absurd mathematical division of time is possible in Bishan Swarup's effort to create a special history of Odisha. Bishan Swarup is an engineer and a mathematician. However, did the God of Death keep the mathematical calculations so accurately and precisely and divided the life span of the fourteen Kesharis equally during their period of rule?

After deciding that the present temple at Konarka was built by Purandara Keshari, Bishan Swarup questions, "Then which temple did Narasingha Deba build? Apart from *Madala Panji*, on the copper plate inscription of Narasingha Deba-II it is also written that Narasingha Deba-I or Langula Narasingha Deba constructed the temple of Konarka. Considering all these evidences it was impossible for Bishan Swarup not to assign a temple to Langula Narasingha Deba. Hence, Bishan Swarup has ultimately said in support of his statement that, only the *Natya Mandira* was built by Langula Narasingha Deba and he cited the writings on the copper plate in support of his statement, though incorrectly.

The *Shloka* written on the copper plate is stated below –

Verses written in Sanskrit language – (Transliterated version)–

> Kurban Prakashmanisham Dwijasaja Krutya
> Meru Tulapurushamukhyamahartha-Daneih
> Sthhatum Sureih Saha Mah Kalayamshch Kona-
> Kone Kutirakamchikaradushmarashmeh

-Copper Plate Inscription of Narasingha Deba-II- 86th *Shloka*- (Appendix-II-Sl. No.22)

It means that Narasingha Deba-I, to acquire a place in the heaven along with the gods and goddesses, applied his influences, made donations and built an abode for the Sun God at Konarka.*

*FOOT NOTE: There were certain grammatical and rhyming mistakes in the original Sanskrit extract published in *Mukur* by Pundit Mrityunjaya Rath. In the second stanza the word *"Purushakhya"* did not rhyme with the rest. I replaced the word with *"Purushamukhya"*. Hence, the meaning of the stanza given by Pundit Mrityunjaya Rath in *Mukur* is not right. Again in the second stanza the words *"Mahat Kalayanti"* stated by him do not express any meaning. Hence, I also replaced the words here with *"MahahKalayansch"*.

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Bishan Swarup says that, as there is the word *"Kutirakan"* (hut) in the above-mentioned Sanskrit verses, King Narasingha Deba only built the *Natya Mandira* which can be termed as a hut in comparison to the main temple of Konarka. The main temple can no way be called a hut. Hence, he strongly believes that King Narasingha Deba built only the *Natya Mandira* and not the main temple of Konarka. Again, the meaning of the last two stanzas of the Sanskrit verses as written in the Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society is:

"He built in *Konakona*, a place of great renown, a temple for the Sun to live in with the other gods." – Meaning, the Sun to live in with other gods, he built a temple at the famous place of *Konakona*. Bishan Swarup considers this translation by the journal as incorrect. Bishan Swarup says that, the Sun is the prime god of *Konakona* or Konarka and the other gods and goddesses present there were usually considered as less important. There were no other important individual temples or special worships attached to them. They were all installed only as the protectors of the place. Hence, it is not proper to say that the King built the temple for the Sun God to live with the other gods and goddesses; rather, it was the other way around. The King built the temple for the other gods and goddesses to live with the Sun God. Hence, "to live in with the other gods" has no meaning at all. Bishan Swarup has given a better translation of the Sanskrit stanza in his book which is stated below –

"He erected in the well-renowned place *Konakona* of (belonging to) the Sun God, a building in order to stay with the gods', meaning, a building where pilgrims could sit for a short time in the *Devasthana*."

It means that, he (King Narasingha Deba) built a large house at *Konakona* (Konarka), the famous centre of the Sun God for living with the gods (or for the pilgrims to sit there for a while). Hence Bishan Swarup determines that King Narasingha Deba built only the *Natya Mandira* located in front of the temple of Konarka, as that is the place where the devotees wait for conducting worship and rituals.

The meaning of the last two stanzas published in *Mukur* basing on the explanation given in the Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society is not correct. However, the version translated by Bishan Swarup contains even more serious defects than what he himself detected in the version published in *Mukur*. First, the meaning of *"Mahat Kalayanti"* is not known. In the magazine (*Mukur*) it is explained as an adjective to *Konakona*, meaning *"Konakona*, a place of great renown". There is no such rule in grammar which makes *"Kalayanti"* an adjective in Sanskrit language. It is unfortunate that a mistake of such magnitude could not draw the attention of Nagendra Nath Bose, the publisher of the copper plate inscriptions. I have changed the word *"Kalayanti"* to *"Mah Kalayan"* to rhyme it with the word *"Kurchan"* of the first stanza. Here *"Mah"* means "brightness, power or qualification" and *"Kalayan"* means "after acquiring".

Secondly, as per the magazine (*Mukur*), *"Sureih Sahasthatun"* means "Sun to live in with the other gods and goddesses", which is grammatically very wrong. The writer of the copper plate might have been less competent in the field of history, but his knowledge in Sanskrit grammar should not be under estimated. Had the meaning of *"Sureih Sahasthatun"* been the Sun God then it should have been *"Sthapayitun"* as the King is the noun of the sentence. Hence the explanation given by Bishan Swarup that, *"Sureih Sahasthatun"* means the pilgrims and not the Sun seems more appropriate.

Though the above explanation given by Bishan Swarup is grammatically correct, it is does not go with the meaning of the previous and the later stanzas. Firstly, he has used the word "building" very intelligently in place of the word "temple" mentioned in the magazine to justify his opinion regarding the word *"Kutiraka"* in the original Sanskrit verses. *"Kutiraka"* means hut, and, as per Bishan Swarup, it cannot mean temple, then how does it mean "Building"? If the main temple cannot be termed as *"Kutiraka"* for some reason, how can the *Natya Mandira* be so under the same rule? Though the *Natya Mandira* is much smaller in size than that of the main temple, it is not proper to call it a hut. A temple which carries such wonderful and elegant sculpture that makes the visitor spellbound cannot just be called a hut.

Secondly, it is stated in the first two stanzas of the verses that, King Narasingha Deba donated to the Brahmins valuables equal in weight to that of his own and distributed huge quantities of gold almost equal to the size of the *Meru* hill. As a result he acquired a place to live in the heaven along with the gods and the goddesses. For getting a place in the heaven after death, people usually make donations and build temples. The practice and the faith in it are still continuing in the society. Narasingha Deba built the famous Sun temple at Konarka and donated a huge amount of gold to acquire a place in the heaven. Hence, it seems proper to mean *"Sureih Sahasthatun"*

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as "The King himself to live with the gods and goddesses in the heaven, "and again, it also seems proper with respect to the meanings of the stanzas written prior to and after this stanza. Hence the complete *Shloka* (hymn or verses) means like this –

"He (King Narasingha Deba) applied his influence, donated huge quantities of gold and valuables to the Brahmins and built a temple for the Sun God at *Konakona* (Konarka) to acquire his rights or to qualify himself to live with the gods and the goddesses in the heaven."

If Bishan Swarup's description regarding the meaning of the verses is accepted then we do not find any relationship between the first two and the last two stanzas. The first two stanzas describe the King's huge donations, and the last two about his act of building the wonderful temple, and the result of the two is to live in heaven with the gods. Specifically, in the stanza before it (stanza No.85), there is a mention about *Tulapurush* donations (donations amounting to equal his own weight), and it was not necessary to mention again the same donations in stanza No.86. Hence, in the first two stanzas only the result of the King's donation is mentioned, that is, the king gets his rights to live with the gods in the heaven because of his donations and the act of building the temple.[1]

Had the King built only the *Natya Mandira* for the pilgrims to sit there for some time, then the writer of the copper plate inscription would not have written about the huge donations only for the sake of repetition. It is not possible to bring out the real fact by twisting the original verses and its meaning to match the predetermined thought that the King only built the *Natya Mandira* and not the main temple at Konarka. One can be intelligent enough to twist and turn the meaning while deciphering an evidence just to support his version of explanation, but this practice is not healthy for writing the real history of a nation. The real history is written only when the most reasonable and possible inferences without any defects are accepted for the purpose.

Bishan Swarup has again taken the *Madala Panji* into full confidence and depended upon it to prove his above-described inference regarding construction of the temple at Konarka. He says, " xxxxx Bararaj Narasingha Deva sent his *Patra* (2nd Minister) Shiba Samantaray Mahapatra with money to erect a temple in front of that of Purandara Kesari, over the Padmatula tank, and after its erection, consecrated it and bringing the statue of this god from the temple, kept it there xxxxx." He also further stated that, it would not have been necessary for Narasingha Deba to fill up a gorge with stones to build the main temple of Konarka, unless it was the *Natya Mandira* he was building. The main temple of Konarka could have been built at a new and suitable place, but the *Natya Mandira* had to be built in the same and already existing complex and at that particular place. It is described in *Madala Panji* that, the Ganga Emperor Anangabhima Deba had vowed to build a temple for Lord Jagannatha much bigger than the temple at Puri existing at the time. However, the temple could not be made as big as he wished. Hence, as a corrective measure to mitigate the sin committed by his father for not executing his vow properly, the Crown Prince Narasingha Deba wanted to build a temple on the gorge of Padmatola in front of the badly deteriorated sun temple once built by Emperor Purandara Keshari. Hence, Bishan Swarup explains that, as Anangabhima Deba's temple at Puri could not be made as large as he wished, there were some surplus funds that could not be spent in this temple. To save his father Anangabhima Deba from committing the sin of not spending the entire amount in constructing the temple, Narasingha Deba built the *Natya Mandira* at Konarka with the surplus funds. With his analysis, Bishan Swarup finally infers that, the Main Temple of Konarka was built by Purandara Keshari in the second half of the 9th Century AD and the *Natya Mandira* was built by Narasingha Deba in 1241 AD.

The weakness in his argument is quite apparent. It is a matter of surprise to see a writer like Bishan Swarup being satisfied with such a weak reasoning. Firstly, *Madala Panji* states that, the temple of Konarka was built over the gorge of Padmatola and the legend about Shibei Santara also reconfirms it. Bishan Swarup says that, the Padmatola Gorge was there in front of the main temple of Konarka, at the place where the *Natya Mandira* stands now. Shibei Santara had to fill up this gorge with stone to construct the *Natya Mandira*. However, it does not seem proper for the King to have built such a huge and expensive temple like the main temple of Konarka, keeping a gorge at a point so close in its front. It is also not technically feasible to build such a huge temple so close to the

1. Verses written in Sanskrit language – (Transliterated version)–

Vujavubi Girayoshtou Jasya Vumindra Varttuh
Kshiti Cha Rana Samarthah Kinchadik Kunjarondrah
Atulaya Diha Saswachet (Shashwachet?) Tula Purushena
Kwavabatu Kanakadrirdebatanam Guhavut (85)
-Copper Plate Inscription of Narasingha Deba – II- 85th *Shloko*- (Appendix – II, Sl. No. 23)

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gorge of Padmatola as the soil there must be quite soft consisting of loose sand. It would not have been feasible for the soil to take the load of the main temple unless the gorge had been filled up earlier to prevent sinking of its foundation. Hence, the gorge must have been filled up before start of the construction of the main temple. One wonders to think that, how could an engineer like Bishan Swarup believe that a huge temple like Konarka was built just on the edge of the gorge of such a large river.

Secondly, if Bishan Swarup believed in *Madala Panji*, there was no reason to believe only in a few words of a sentence and not on the whole sentence. Bishan Swarup has placed an extract from *Madala Panji* in the Page 5 of his own book "KONARK" which explains that, Narasingha Deba built the temple of Konarka, consecrated it, and installed the image of Sun God taken from the deteriorated temple constructed earlier by Purandara Keshari. Lastly, Bishan Swarup also writes, borrowing from the *Madala Panji*, that to save his father from the sin, he allotted additional agricultural land and properties for worship of the Sun God and maintenance of the temple in a much better manner. Hence, it is clear that the image of the Sun once installed in the temple of Purandara Keshari was brought in to the temple of Narasingha Deba and there it was worshipped with more pomp and ceremony. Had the *Natya Mandira* been the only temple constructed by Narasingha Deba, was it that the Sun God was being worshipped in the *Natya Mandira* after it was brought out of the temple of Purandara Keshari? The sentence of *Madala Panji*, which Bishan Swarup believes as true, says that, Narasingha Deba built the temple on the gorge of Padmatola in front of the temple once built by Purandara Keshari, and the same sentence further states that, Narasingha Deba removed the image of the Sun God from the temple of Purandara Keshari and installed it in his own temple.

Thirdly, Bishan Swarup says that Narasingha Deba built the temple at Konarka with the money that was saved after completion of the temple at Puri. Bishan Swarup has written quite a long chapter about the temple basing on the description of Konarka temple given by Abul Fazl. He also considers the time of construction stated by Abul Fazl as right. He states that, Abul Fazl's description about Konarka was not as mistaken as Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra thinks it to be. He states, "Dr. Rahendra Lala Mitra questions the reliability of Abul Fazl's description saying that the details given by him were obviously incorrect. But except the direction of the doorways of the temple in front of which the figures of lions, elephants and horses were set up and the length of the monolithic pillar which was at the time partly buried under sand, there is not a single inaccuracy in his descriptions. The mistakes in enclosure walls are in the translation and not in the original work."[1]

Bishan Swarup has himself translated the writings of Abul Fazl, after discarding the translation made by Gladwin, which states that an amount equivalent to 12 years' revenue of Odisha was spent in completing the construction of the temple at Konarka. I have calculated the value of the total revenue generated in Odisha in 12 years at that time (Chapter IV) to be Rupees Twenty-two crore and seventy-five lakh, and according to Manomohan Ganguli's calculation it is Rupees Thirty-six crore. Was such a huge amount of 22 to 23 crore of Rupees really the left over funds after construction of the Puri temple and the *Natya Mandira* was built with this total amount? Again, how did Bishan Swarup know that the *Natya Mandira* was built in the year 1241AD? As per *Madala Panji*, Narasingha Deba ascended the throne in the year 1237 AD and according to the copper plate inscription of Narasingha Deba-II; the year is stated as 1253 AD. So which one did he believe in? As he has repeatedly rejected the information given in *Madala Panji*, he would not have believed in it, that is, the year 1237 AD as the start of rule by Narasingha Deba. If so, how did he say that the *Natya Mandira* was built by Narasingha Deba in the year 1241 AD?

Hence, it is believed that, the Sun God was being worshipped in the temple constructed by Purandara Keshari, even before Narasingha Deba built the present temple of Konarka. Since the older temple was almost ruined; Narasingha Deba built the present temple of Konarka on the gorge of Padmatola spending an amount equivalent to about twelve years' revenue collection of Odisha. On completion of the temple he removed the image of the Sun God from the old temple built by Purandara Keshari and installed it in his new temple. He also made extensive arrangements for continuing worship of the Sun God in his new temple with more pomp and ceremony (Chapter X).

There may be some truth in both the statements of Abul Fazl- "before 730 years of his visit the temple of Konarka was built" and "it was built by King Narasingha Deba." It can be inferred that, these two statements, if assumed to be true, do not relate to one temple, rather, they relate to two different temples. "Purandara Keshari built a temple at Konarka" is as true as "King Narasingha Deba built the present temple at Konarka in the year 1278

1. BishanSwarup – Konark – P. 70

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AD". It might be possible that Abul Fazl mistakenly considered both these temples as one, and he was not also very particular about examining and finding the truth behind each statement. He wrote about a few things only based on the descriptions given to him by others. It might also have happened that the person who reported the fact to Abul Fazl got the facts about both the temples mixed up in his mind.

It is said in the first part of this chapter that, it is not safe to determine the construction period of a temple only from the appearance and style of the sculpture. The sculpture which appears to me as belonging to the 9th Century is not impossible to be considered by some other readers of my book as belonging to the 12th Century. If one has some idea about the subject, it becomes easier to determine the time period of sculptural art than that of the literary creations. Now, basing on the style of the language and on the poetry, some infer that the greatest poet Kalidas belonged to the 6th Century AD, some others place him in the 7th Century AD and even there are some who say that he belonged to the 1st or the 2nd Century BC. The extent of expression of art in poetry or other literary work and the feelings created by it in the hearts of the people are much more evident than what it is with the sculptural art. Hence, it is impossible to apply the same procedure to the sculptural work executed in the temple of Konarka that is applied to literary work for determination of its time period. If at all this procedure is applied, it is not possible to say that the *Natya Mandira* of Konarka was built after the temple of Puri was constructed. Bishan Swarup, basing his opinion on Fergusson's cycle of development of the sculptural art in Odisha, states that the cycle started from the temple of Bhubaneswar, reached its peak with the temple of Konarka and then started to decline. He further says that the temple of Puri was built during this declining period. Hence, after the temple of Puri, the sculptural art in Odisha continued to decline and finally reached its bottom. So it was quite natural for the sculptural art adorning the *Natya Mandira* of Konarka, built almost 100 years after the construction of the temple at Puri, to be of much less quality than that of the temple at Puri. However, what Bishan Swarup has said about the sculptural art in *Natya Mandira* at other places in his book, is entirely different. He has said that, though the carvings on *Natya Mandira* are of lesser quality than those on the temple of Konarka, they are much better than those seen on the other temples in Odisha. If his assumption of the time of rise and fall of the development cycle of sculptural art in Odisha is right, then how is it that the carvings on *Natya Mandira* are better and not worse than the carvings on the temple at Puri? Hence, the assumption of Bishan Swarup derived from the appearance and quality of the sculptural work at Konarka, that the main temple and the porch of Konarka was built by Purandara Keshari in the 9th Century and the *Natya Mandira* by Narasingha Deba in the 13th Century, is not at all acceptable. To determine the time period of a temple from the appearance of the sculptural art is like a drowning man holding on to a piece of straw to save his life.

Bishan Swarup has tried further to determine the time period of the temple at Konarka by studying the symbols and the insignia of religion present on the sculpture decorating the temple. He explains that, the main temple bears insignia of the Shaiva sect and hence it was built during the rule by the Kesharis who were Shaivas. In the 12th Century AD, the Hindu religion was flooded with the feelings of devotion and divine love by the preaching of Ramanuja. The *Natya Mandira* bears all the images related to it and hence it is assumed to have been built by Narasingha Deba. However, this opinion is not based on any proof and is simply baseless. The *Natya Mandira* is supposed to carry the images depicting divine love only and nothing else. Again, I do not see where the Shaiva influence has been expressed predominantly in the sculpture of the main temple. It may be proper for a common man to assume such baseless facts just to prove his point, but the historians should stay far away from such practices.

Lastly, Bishan Swarup has tried to determine the time period of the temple at Konarka with a new and baseless assumption based on astrology.

He says, "It has been observed that this festival (Chandrabhaga) originated here, and so must have been started either with the construction of the temple or just after its completion, in order to attract annually a crowd of people to the place and thus spread its sanctity. This, it may be noted, is a usual custom with all sacred places. The temple being dedicated to the Sun, and the ceremony of the festival being entirely connected with him, it is sure that the festival was observed each year on the sun coming to a particular position of the Zodiac. This was most probably the Agnikona or south-east corner, i.e., the corner midway between *Makara* (Capricorn) and *Mesha* (Aries) xxxx."

Chandrabhaga bathing festival is being celebrated till date on the seventh day of the bright half of the month of *Magha* (January - February). Hence, the festival was started in the year when the Sun was exactly in the southeast

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corner. Because of the retrograde movement of equinoxes the Sun is not seen at this angle any more. As per the Hindu chronicle (*Panjika*) the Sun moves to 27½ degrees towards Capricorn on the day of Chandrabhaga bathing festival which is 17½ degrees short of the southeast direction. Every year the retrograde movement of equinoxes (Kranti) commences by 1 minute or moves by 1 degree in 60 years. Hence to move 17½ degrees it would have taken (17½ x 60 = 1050) 1050 years.

Bishan Swarup says, "This period with perhaps a few years added to it, has therefore elapsed since the festival was first started, and represents very nearly the age of the Konarka temple. This also carries its construction to about the middle of the 9th century, and so the conclusion arrived at already may be safely taken as correct."[1]

This assumption of Bishan Swarup shows the lack of deep research done by him and is as baseless as his other assumptions. It is not proper to relate the bathing festival at Chandrabhaga with the present temple at Konarka. It has been said repeatedly in this book and also expressed by Bishan Swarup in his own book that the sanctity of Konarka did not start after the present temple was built there. Before the construction of the present temple at Konarka, the Sun God was also being worshipped in the temple constructed by Purandara Keshari. It cannot also be said that the practice was not followed even before that. Bishan Swarup has himself admitted to this fact in his book. Hence, if the Chandrabhaga festival was started to increase the inflow of the pilgrims or tourists, then it must have been started since the day the place was established as a holy centre. There is no relation of it with the construction of the present temple and such relationship can no way be proved. Bishan Swarup has committed a grave mistake by misguiding the readers of his book by making false statements just to support his version of explanation regarding the construction period of the Konarka temple. With his limited knowledge in astrology, he has even misused the astrological calculations to fully prove his point. Where from did he know that the precession of equinoxes is 1 minute per year and 1 degree in 60 years? In astrology, the precession of equinoxes is taken as 50.24 seconds or 1 degree in 72 years. If this calculation is applied to Bishan Swarup's model, then we arrive at the figure of 1260 years or the temple of Konarka was built in the middle of the 7th Century AD, that is, 200 years earlier than what he has calculated it to be. Even after using the wrong values of "1 degree in 60 years" in his calculation, Bishan Swarup could not reach his desired figure and had to add some more years arbitrarily to the calculated value of 1050 years to arrive at the time period he says the temple at Konarka was built, that is, in the middle of the 9th Century AD. Bishan Swarup has shown a bright example in his book "KONARK" on how at times, even the famous writers like him, twist and turn the facts and take the help of baseless reasoning and false statements just to support their own versions of explanations.

Lastly, it is believed, based on the writings in *Madala Panji* that, all the temples at Konarka were built by King Narasingha Deba in the year 1278 AD. Had Abul Fazl not believed in the wrong statements made by his informer and written that Konarka temple was built 730 years before his visit; so much controversy regarding the matter would not have taken place.

The law of evolution and development, the evidences of religion or the astrological calculations stated here in this regard are baseless and put forward only to support the wrong statements made based on the writings of Abul Fazl. However, in front of the hard truth of the real history, these baseless statements vanish like the fog in sunshine.

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1. Bishan Swarup – Konark

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KING NARASINGHA DEBA'S EMPIRE



SHOWS APPROXIMATE LOCATIONS, BOUNDARIES AND RIVER PATHS

THIS SKETCH IS BASED ON ANDREW STERLING'S DESCRIPTION STATED BELOW
AND A SKETCH DISPLAYED AT KONARKA MUSEUM

"During the sway of the Princes of Ganga Vansa line, for a period of nearly four centuries, the boundaries of the Raj or kingdom of Orissa may be stated as follows, with sufficient accuracy for a general description. North, a line drawn from the Triveni or Terveny ghat above Hoogly, through Bishenpur to the frontier of Patkum; east, the river Hoogly and the sea; south, the Godavari or Ganja Godavari; and the west, a line carried from Singbhum to Sonepur, striking Gangapur, Sumbulpur and its dependencies, and thence through Bastar to Jayapur, and the Godavari. Thus in more prosperous days of Orissan monarchy, and that too at no very remote period, it comprised within its limits four of our modern zillahs entire, and portions of three others, viz. Midnapore, Cuttack, Ganjam and Vizagapatam, with parts of the Jungle Mehals, Hoogly and Rajmundry, besides a portion of the hills and woodland country of Gondwana." .... Andrew Sterling & James Peggs – "Orissa" – Page 11

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CHAPTER X

THE FESTIVALS AND THE OFFERINGS

The details of the antiquity and sanctity of Konarka have been described earlier in this book. It has been said in Chapter-III that a large number of Hindu pilgrims used to gather at Konarka to observe many festivals and rituals during the year. Hence, it is clearly understood that, in the past, every year, many festivals were scheduled and celebrated, and offerings were dedicated to the Sun God at Konarka. No such arrangements are prevailing there now. Presently, Konarka Deba or the Sun God is not there in the temple of Konarka and the festivals related to him are not being celebrated any longer. After the main temple collapsed, the Sun God was transferred to the temple of Jagannatha in Puri and all the festivals celebrated at Konarka were discontinued since then. However, Konarka was famous not only for the present temple. It was as famous as the holy towns of Puri and Bhubaneswar, being known as Suryakshetra (centre for worship of the Sun) and Padmakshetra (the sacred lotus zone) since many ages and the Sun God being worshipped there since then. Like the temple at Puri was built many times over, replacing the deteriorated previous temples and Jagannatha had been repeatedly transferred to the newer ones for continuation of his worship, the Sun God and the temple of Konarka also went through the same process. In Chapter IX it has been said that Shamba, after recovering from the disease of leprosy, as per the directions of the Sun God, installed the image of Mitraditya (The Sun God) at Konarka before returning to Dwaraka, his native place. After that, for many ages the kings and the emperors continued to worship the Sun God there. During the rule of the Kesharis in Odisha, in the 9th century AD, Purandara Keshari built a new temple for the Sun God at the same place. All the later rulers of Keshari dynasty and those of Ganga dynasty worshipped the Sun in the temple built by Purandara Keshari. Then in the 13th Century Narasingha Deba built the present temple of Konarka after the older temple built by Purandara Keshari was ruined. The deity of the Sun installed in the ruined temple was transferred to this new temple and worship of the Sun God continued at Konarka which was started since the very ancient days.

However, some historians are of the opinion that the worship of the Sun God started at Konarka only after the new temple was constructed. Some say that the image of the Sun God was never installed in the temple of Konarka as the temple collapsed soon after the completion of its construction. Some even say that the temple was never completed as it collapsed before its completion. It is written by M. H. Arnott that the main temple at Konarka collapsed before its construction was completed. Hence he assumes that, the deity of the Sun God was never installed in the temple.[1] Therefore, it can be inferred from his statement that the King had made no arrangements for the offerings or donated agricultural land to the temple or set up habitats for the priests and the servitors of the Sun God. Now, it is neither the proper place nor the proper time to examine the truth in his statement. It will be discussed in detail in Chapter XIV of this book while analysing the fall of the temple. However, this much can be said here that, irrespective of the opinion of M. H. Arnott, the deity of the Sun God was installed in the temple of Konarka after completion of its construction. Arrangements were made for maintenance of the temple and also for the worship of and the offerings for the installed deity.

In *Madala Panji* it has been said earlier that, before the present temple of Konarka was constructed, the Sun God was installed in the temple built by Purandara Keshari. He also installed eight villages for the Brahmins near the temple. Purandara and the other kings preceding and succeeding him also used to worship the Sun at this place.

It is written in *Madala Panji*[2] that, in Maitreya Bana, Shamba built a temple on the bank of the River Chandrabhaga. In this temple, Mitraditya Surya (The Sun) was installed and worshipped. The worship of the Sun continued there even after Shamba returned to Dwaraka after he was relieved of the curse. For many ages, the rulers continued to worship the Sun God at the place. In this *Kaliyuga*, after the rule of various kings, Purandara Keshari of Keshari dynasty built a temple at the same place and installed the previously existing deity of the Sun God in the new temple. For providing continued service to and worship of the Sun God, he also donated land and installed eight villages for the Brahmins. After that, the later rulers of the Keshari and the Ganga dynasties continued to worship the Sun God there. At the time of rule by Anangabhima Deba, the revenue collection in Odisha increased

1. M. H. Arnott– Bengal District Gazetteer – Puri – P. 279
2. Bishan Swarup – Konark – PP. 6 – 7

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substantially. Hence, he allotted more funds for the offerings and the daily expenses of the temple and fixed the amount that was to be spent for the worship of and offerings to the Sun God, the other associate and auxiliary gods and goddesses present there and also for the remuneration of the servitors.*

During the period of the kings ruling before Anangabhima Deba an amount of 42, 500 *Kahana Kaudi* was being spent for the worship and the offerings of the Sun. Anangabhima Deba added 30, 000 more to this amount. However, as per the advice of a counsellor named Ishwara he reduced the additional amount from 30, 000 to 10, 000 *Kahana Kaudi*. Hence, at the time of the rule of Anangabhima Deba the total amount budgeted for offerings to the Sun God remained at 52, 500 *Kahana Kaudi*. Later, *Kaudi*, the currency of the kingdom was replaced with gold, 15 *Kahana Kaudi* being equivalent to 1 *Madha* or ½ *Tola* of gold. Hence, for the offerings of the Sun God, the budget was fixed at 3, 500 *Madha* or 1, 750 *Tolas* of gold.

The various offerings made at different times of the day are given below –

01. Morning *Dhupa* 02. Bathing in *Panchamruta* and Rajabhoga 03. Afternoon Offerings
04. Late afternoon or *Abakash* Offerings 05. Evening *Dhupa* 06. *Badasinghara* at night
07. *Ballava* or Offerings at late in the night

For Konarka Deba (the Sun God) only, for all the above- mentioned offerings, an amount of 5 *Madha* gold was fixed as daily expenses. During the entire year no offerings were being made for 5 days. Hence :-

For 360 days of Offerings	1,800 *Madha* Gold
For Offerings of the Holy Zone	100 *Madha* Gold
Total Expenses	1,900 *Madha* Gold
Matiyar Viyana	200 *Madha* Gold
Camphor and Sandal Wood	100 *Madha* Gold
Flowers	100 *Madha* Gold
Magha Shukla Saptami & Dwadashi Yatra And Other Festivals	300 *Madha* Gold
For the Servitors of the Temple	400 *Madha* Gold
Total Expenses	1,100 *Madha* Gold
Maya Debi (Ramachandi) and other Deities in the Complex	?
Astashambhu (Rameshwara, Chitreshwara, Mangaleshwara, Ishaneshwara, Mukteshwara, Tribenishwara, Utpaleshwara and Shobhaneshwara)	160 *Madha* Gold
Astachandi (Khalakothi, Ramachandi, Bhagabati, Rudrani,Khileshwari, Charchika and Chitreshwari)	120 *Madha* Gold
Aruna	15 *Madha* Gold
Four Dwarapala (Gate Keepers)	20 *Madha* Gold
Other Deities of the Complex	60 *Madha* Gold
Chandrabhaga	?
Water, Land and Sky	15 *Madha* Gold
Total Expenses	387 *Madha* Gold
Grand Total	**3,387 *Madha* Gold**

There is a balance of 113 *Madha* gold out of the total budget of 3,500 *Madha* gold. Perhaps out of this balance amount 100 *Madha* gold was spent for Maya Debi (Ramachandi) and the other deities in the complex and the rest 13 *Madha* gold was being spent for Chandrabhaga.

After Anangabhima Deba, his son Narasingha Deba increased the budgeted amount of expenditure for offerings and worship, and donated some more agricultural land to the temple to meet the enhanced expenses.

***FOOT NOTE**: During the rule of the Kesharis the area of Odisha was 11, 000 square miles and the amount of revenue collected was 1, 500, 000 *Madha* of gold. During the rule of Anangabhima Deba the area of Odisha was substantially extended to cover 1, 39, 407 square miles and the revenue collection increased to 3, 500, 000 *Madha* of gold.

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Hence, the Sun God was worshipped with more pump and ceremony during the rule of Narasingha Deba. After the death of the last Hindu King Mukunda Deba, the temple was invaded by the Muslims. However, they could not make the temple to fall and returned only with its *Kalasha* and *Dhwajapadma*. As the temple became unholy by the entrée of the Muslims, all the worship and rituals observed there were stopped from that day.

Studying the descriptions given in *Madala Panji* regarding the elaborate arrangements made for the offerings *(Bhoga)* at Konarka, the statement that 'the main temple of Konarka collapsed even before it was consecrated' cannot be accepted. However, probably, the offerings in the temple were not being made as per the chronology given in *Madala Panji*. Studying the chronology of offerings made in other major temples now existing, the offerings at Konarka was probably made in the order as described below to which Bishan Swarup also agrees.

Very early in the morning, soon after rising from the bed, the deity of the Sun God was being bathed in *Panchamruta* (a mixture of honey, milk, curd, ghee and molasses) and then offered some light food (*Ballava* or *Balabhoga*). In the forenoon, *Dhupa* was being offered followed by the main offerings in the afternoon. The *Abakasha* offering was being made in the afternoon with light food followed by a brief rest till the evening. At the beginning of the evening the *Alati* (greeting and worshiping the deity with lighted lamps) was being performed with light refreshments. It was followed by the evening *Dhupa* or the main offering of the evening. After this ritual, the Sun God was being decorated with many ornaments, flowers, sandalwood paste, etc. and this ritual was known as *Badasinghara*. Some offerings were also being made during the *Badasinghara* ritual. Then the most important offering of the day *Rajabhoga* was being offered just before the Sun God was retiring for the day.

As per *Madala Panji*, twelve festivals were being celebrated at Konarka. However, as the *Magha Saptamai* festival was the main festival, *Madala Panji* mentions only this one. There are no descriptions of other festivals of Konarka in *Madala Panji*. However, from the description about the sanctity of Konarka given in *Kapila Samhita*[1] it is presumed that, as in Puri and Bhubaneswar, a car festival was also being celebrated at Konarka. It is written in *Brahma Purana*[2] that a festival known as *Chaitra Yatra* was being celebrated in Konarka in the bright phase of the moon in the month of *Chaitra* (March - April). However, it is now very difficult to gather information about all the festivals those were being celebrated at the place. Hence, a few of the festivals of Konarka about which some information is available are described below.

***Ratha Yatra* (Car Festival) -**

The *Ratha Yatra* or the car festival was one of the major festivals being celebrated at Konarka. It is heard from the local people that there was a *Gundicha* temple (the rest house at the destination for the God to stay during the journey period) at a distance of 1½ miles northeast of Konarka temple which was the final destination of the car during the festival. Now, only some bricks are seen lying there. People say that a land lord named Jagannatha Sahu had carried away a lot more bricks dug out of the site. Though the compound of this *Gundicha* temple was made of bricks, it is not known whether the temple was made of brick or stone. There was a road from the temple of Konarka leading to the *Gundicha* temple. No trace of the road is seen now. However, since a car festival was being celebrated, there must have been at least a *Gundicha* temple and a wide road connecting the main temple complex with the *Gundicha* temple. In Puri and Bhubaneswar, the *Gundicha* temple is located at the north direction of the main temples. Hence, it is assumed that the *Gundicha* temple at Konarka was also located in the north or the north-east direction of the main temple.

There is no information to determine the day on which the car festival was being celebrated at Konarka. In *Kapila Samhita* no names of any other festival except the name of the car festival is mentioned. Hence, it can be inferred that like the *Magha Shukla Saptami* festival, the *Ratha Yatra* or the car festival was also famous in the State and outside. As per *Brahma Purana*, in the bright phase of the moon in the month of *Chaitra* (March - April) another festival known as *Chaitra* Yatra was being celebrated. Hence, taking this reference, Bishan Swarup assumes that the car festival at Konarka was being celebrated on the 8th day from the new moon day in the month of *Chaitra*. The car festival at Bhubaneswar is celebrated on *Ashokasthami*, the day assumed by Bishan Swarup as the day of the car festival in Konarka. However, it is not likely for the Car Festival at Konarka being organised on the same day the festival is celebrated at Bhubaneswar. In Odisha no two major festivals of two different God or Goddesses are conducted on the same day. The day the car festival of Jagannatha is celebrated in Puri, the car festival of Lingaraja in Bhubaneswar is not celebrated on that day and so is the case with the car festival of

1. *Kapila Samhita* - Second Chapter
2. *Brahma Purana* - Second Chapter

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Jajpur. Apart from conducting the festivals in honour of the gods and the goddesses, these festivals were all so arranged to achieve another important objective, that is, to congregate all the new and wonderful products made at different places in the country at one place and to unite all different people from distant places for exchange of feelings and friendship among them. The Hindu State is divided into many different sections in terms of regions and languages, traditions and cultures, further aided by the deep forests, sky-high mountains, large rivers and vast expanse of the land, preventing the people from travelling with ease from one region to the other. Hence, there was no better way or institutions like those of the modern days, to make the people of different regions know each other and create a feeling of nationalism amongst them. In the past, no national level societies were formed, or special agricultural exhibitions were arranged in the national level to fulfil this purpose. All these essential requirements were being met by the festivals of the gods and the religious gatherings on festive occasions. To take part in these festivals, thousands and thousands of religious Hindus travel hundreds and hundreds of miles on foot and even today, they are continuing to do so. To create a feeling of oneness among the people of various regions and for the development of industry and commerce, this was the only and the best practice followed in the past. Hence, what Bishan Swarup has assumed, that in competition with the car festival in Bhubaneswar, the car festival at Konarka was organised on the same day of *Ashokastami*, is not probable. Of course, in Bhubaneswar, on the day of car festival, Chandrasekhar, the representative deity *(Chalanti Pratima)* of Lingaraja, travels to the temple of Rameshwara. However, it cannot be said that, on the same day, the deity of the Sun God was also travelling to the temple of Rameshwara in Konarka. There was no such competitive intention between the festivals conducted at Konarka and that in Bhubaneswar or there was any envy between the people of the two places to surpass one by the other in pomp and ceremony in organising the festivals. The festivals organised at all places were being celebrated in honour of the gods and the goddesses being universally accepted by all the societies. Hence, it is more likely that the car festival at Konarka was being celebrated before or after the car festival in Bhubaneswar and never on the same day. Bishan Swarup has himself also said at another place in his book that the car festivals in Bhubaneswar and in Konarka were being celebrated on different days.[1]

In Odisha, car festival or *Ratha Yatra* is conducted at four places. The car festival is also celebrated at many other places in India. Some archaeologists say that these car festivals are imitated from the Buddhists. Many of our writers and some from abroad have proved that the car festival of Jagannatha in Puri was started following a Buddhist tradition. Jagannatha is an Avatar of Buddha and hence the car festival of Jagannatha is a Buddhist festival. To prove that Jagannatha's car festival is an imitation of the Buddhist car festival, Bishan Swarup has taken the help of many Buddhist scriptures and travelogues. Buddha was himself travelling by *Ratha* (car or chariot) and after his death his disciples celebrated car festivals carrying the remnants of his mortal body. If Bishan Swarup's opinion is right, then why at Konarka only, it may be said that, all the car festivals held at different places in the country are being conducted only following the Buddhist traditions and customs.

Since so much has been said in different media that the car festival is a Buddhist practice, it is not easy to prove it otherwise. Even if a different opinion is expressed, it is not known if it would be accepted by the readers. It is also not proper at this point to analyse the origin of the car festival celebrated at each place. However, the car festival of Puri is well known everywhere and is still being observed on regular basis since many years. There is no such proof that Puri was ever a Buddhist centre. It was assumed by Dr. J. Fergusson that, the tooth of Buddha was once kept in Puri. However, that has been proved wrong earlier in this book (Chapter III). It has also been said there that the story about the tooth relic described in Buddhist scripture *Dathavansa* kept in Ceylon has yet neither been accepted by the historians as a true event nor is backed by proofs. Even if the story is accepted as a historical event and that the capital city of Odisha was famous as Dantapura due to existence of the tooth relic only, then also, as proved earlier in Chapter III, Dantapura was not the city of Puri. Rather, it was located near Konarka. It is described in the epics that Puri was a deep forest before King Indradyumna installed the image of Jagannatha there. Hence, there is no proof to determine the extent to which the Buddhist religion had influence on Puri. In this situation, it has to be very carefully studied before expressing the opinion that the car festival of Puri is a remnant of the Buddhist tradition. The writer of Puri Gazetteer Mr. O' Malley, being unable to arrive at a particular inference, has preferred to remain silent about the matter.[2]

As has been said earlier (Chapter III), there was a major Buddhist centre near Konarka and the cities of Dantapura and Chitrotpala were located there. With the passage of time the Buddhist religion gradually lost its influence and finally vanished from there. Due to loss of patronage the Buddhist monuments gradually with time deteriorated

1. Bishan Swarup – Konark – P. 83
2. L.S.S. O' Malley – Bengal District Gazetteer – Puri – P. 94

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to finally fall apart. As a symbol of victory of the Hindu religion, *Padmakshetra* (The Sacred Zone of Lotus) was established at Konarka. Even with all these facts available, it is not easy to prove that the car festival at Konarka is a follow-up of the Buddhist tradition. Hiuen Tsang describing Chitrotpala has said that, though Chitrotpala was a prominent Buddhist centre, many Hindus worshipped their gods and goddesses here as per their own traditions and customs.

In the middle of the seventh century, Hiuen Tsang writes in his famous tour diary *Si-Yuki* - "There are a hundred monasteries containing nearly ten thousand monks, who study the law of the "Great Translation" *(Mahayana)* There are also many heretics who frequent the temples of the Devas (Devalayas). The followers of error (Brahmanism) and of the truth (Buddhism) live pell-mell."[1]

Hence, it is not impossible for the Hindus to have been conducting their own car festival here. Again, Hiuen Tsang has written so much and in so detail about the Buddhist temples in Chitrotpala but has never mentioned about Buddhist car festivals celebrated here or at any other place in Odisha. He, in his famous tour diary *Si-Yuki*, has written about certain car festivals being celebrated at some other Buddhist centres in India. Hence it is assumed that there was no tradition of conducting car festivals in the Buddhist population of Odisha. Therefore, it may be inferred that, the car festival at Puri or Konarka was not possibly conducted imitating the Buddhist car festivals being held at places like Sanchi and Pataliputra.[2]

Car festival is not new to India. It just cannot be said that it started from the time of Buddha. The systems and traditions not present in India earlier to the time of Buddha and started only by the Buddhists during or after the period of Buddha can only be termed as Buddhist tradition. In other words, the tradition that did exist in the Brahmin society and later adopted by the Buddhists is rather a Brahmin tradition than being a Buddhist one. The later adoption of such a tradition by the Brahmins would be considered as being adopted from the Brahmins of the pre-Buddhist period and not from the Buddhists. Buddhism did not exist before enlightenment of Buddha. He was travelling to the gardens in a horse-drawn chariot during his youth. The devotees of Buddha were travelling in carts carrying the remnants of his mortal body as a remembrance to this activity of Buddha. Hence, the *Ratha Yatra* or car festival of the Buddhists has been adopted from the life of Shakyasingha (who later became Buddha) of the pre-Buddhist period. It is known from the biography of Shakyasingha that he was riding around in a horse-drawn cart before the emergence of the Buddhist religion. Even before the birth of Buddha, riding around and visiting the gardens in *Rathas* were daily luxuries for the royal families. In the age of *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, the royals were riding the *Ratha* to fight in the war field and also to enjoy the luxury of travelling. The number of horses required to draw the *Ratha* was determined by its size and the purpose it was made for. By the time Buddha was born, the practice of riding around in *Ratha* had already become an ancient practice. Buddha, in his youth, was also riding the horse-drawn cart to visit the gardens in pursuance of this ancient practice. This is not a new procedure introduced by the Buddhists and cannot at all be considered as a new tradition started by them. Apart from the tradition of travelling of the royals by horse drawn carts, it cannot be proved that *Ratha Yatra* was first introduced as a religious activity by the Buddhists only. The *Ratha Yatra* and the other related activities in Buddhism were started for the first time in the time of Ashoka. Ashoka started the tradition of worshipping the remains of the mortal body of Buddha in *Stupas* built by him at Sanchi and other places. The *Ratha Yatra* was introduced into the Buddhist tradition during his time and it continued after that. As per the inscriptions of Ashoka, the *Ratha Yatra* started in the year 256 BC. Hence, it is presumed that, even before the time of Ashoka, *Ratha Yatra* was already a traditional event in the culture of the Brahmins. It is also described in the epics that the gods and goddesses used to travel by *Rathas*. The *Pushpak Ratha* that carried Ramachandra from Sri Lanka (present-day Ceylon) back to Ayodhya belonged initially to Kubera (the God of Wealth). A *Ratha* came prepared from the heaven to carry Raja Harischandra in person to the heaven. *Chandi* fought with and killed *Mahishasura* riding a *Ratha*. These are all events of the mythological period. In the Vedas the travel of the gods and the goddesses by *Rathas* has been described. The Rig Veda describes even the type of decoration applied to the *Rathas* of different god and goddesses. It describes the construction of the *Rathas* like, whose *Ratha* was built with gold and whose with three metals like, gold, silver and copper. Rig Veda further describes about the horses and their decoration like, whether the ornaments were of gold or of other metals. Though these are all imagination of the writers, this line of thinking proves that the *Ratha Yatra* was already included in the tradition of the *Brahminical* religion even before the advent of Buddhism. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra says that, the first sketch of the Indian *Ratha* was drawn in the year 1495 BC.[3] The sketch was drawn by a person of *Rathina* tribe. *Rathina*

1. St. Julien – Hiouen Thsang - P. 184 / Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra– Antiquities of Orissa – Vol. I – P. 7 &P. 136
2. Lt. E. B. Havell – Aryan Rule in India – P. 168
3. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra– Antiquities of Orissa – Vol. I – P. 129

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in Sanskrit means, the charioteer. Henry Torrens had identified the *Rathina* tribe as the Vedic Aryans living in Punjab. Another sketch of a *Ratha* was drawn on the Stupa at Sanchi as per the Buddhist sculptural practice. Ignoring some minor differences in these two sketches, both the sketches look almost similar. Again, the *Ratha* drawn at Sanchi Stupa is quite different from the *Rathas* described in the epics and the Vedas. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra says that, the *Rathas* of the mythological age were heavy in weight, large in size, well decorated and quite similar to those used today for the *Ratha Yatra*. The sketch of *Ratha* drawn on the Sanchi Stupa is quite different in appearance from these ancient *Rathas*. Hence, it can be said that the ancient *Ratha Yatra* (car festival) of the mythological age and the pre-Buddhist period is still continuing today.

'Jagannatha is an incarnation of Buddha' and as per Bishan Swarup, whether his statement is right or wrong, 'the deity of Konarka Deba (Sun God) is the image of Buddha,' may prompt some to say that, the *Ratha Yatra* of Puri and Bhubaneswar belong to the Buddhist tradition. However, Lingaraja in Bhubaneswar and Biraja of Jajpur are neither incarnation of Buddha nor they are Buddhist deities. Hence, the *Ratha Yatra* of Bhubaneswar and that of Jajpur cannot be termed as Buddhist festivals. Not only here, there are many other places in India where *Ratha Yatra* is celebrated. *Ratha Yatra* of Shrikrishna is celebrated in Brundabana where Shrikrishna travels on a *Ratha* from Lakshmichand temple to a garden. Had the *Ratha Yatra* been celebrated at the Buddhist centres only, then it could have been assumed as a tradition of the Buddhists only. Since the very ancient days Brundabana is known as the native place of Shrikrishna. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra says that the ancient Greek writers like Arian and Pliny have expressed that Brundabana and Mathura, being the native places and abode of Shrikrishna, were considered sacred.[1]

Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra again says that, worship of Shrikrishna was in vogue even before the age of Pliny and both Brundabana and Mathura were very famous for this tradition. As per Max Muller, Pliny belongs to the 6th Century BC. However, Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra does not agree and says that Pliny belongs to an age much earlier to the 6th century BC. Nevertheless, it can be safely assumed that Pliny belonged to an age much earlier to that of Buddha. Hence, Brundabana was famous for the devotees of Shrikrishna at an age much earlier to that of Buddha. The killing of Kansa by Shrikrishna in a fight is a major event in his life and as written in the epics, he travelled to Kansapura (the abode of Kansa) riding a *Ratha* to fight with Kansa. Now we know, it would be absurd to assume that *Ratha Yatra* was started with the worship of Shrikrishna and was being celebrated imitating the *Ratha Yatra* of the Buddhists.

The day that was fixed for the *Ratha Yatra* at Patna and at other places was quite different from the day the *Ratha Yatra* is celebrated at Puri. As per the Buddhist epic *Jataka*, the Buddhist *Ratha Yatra* was celebrated on the full moon day in the month of *Ashali*. *Ashali* is not the month of *Ashadha* (June-July), Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra has also agreed to it, and has further proved that, it is the full moon day in the month of *Phalguna* (March-April) or *Chaitra* (February-March). Since the *Dola* festival is observed all over the Hindu State on the full moon day in the month of *Phalguna*, Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra thinks that the Buddhist *Ratha Yatra* was being celebrated on that day. It is quite apparent that the assumption and the reasoning of Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra are not true. It is not right to say that, on the day of *Dola Yatra*, that is, on the full moon day in month of *Phalguna*, the *Ratha Yatra* was celebrated to honour the day on which Buddha had taken birth or renounced worldly life. If it is assumed that the *Ratha Yatra* was being celebrated on this day, then all the other *Ratha Yatras* must have been being celebrated on the same day imitating the Buddhist tradition. Hence, had it been true, there was no reason to celebrate the *Ratha Yatra* in Puri on the 2nd day from the new moon day in the month of *Ashadha* (June-July), on the 8th day from the new moon day in the month of *Chaitra* (February-March) at Bhubaneswar, on the 8th day from the new moon day in the month of *Ashwina* (September-October) at Jajpur and on a separate day in Konarka. Taking in to account all these facts, it can be safely assumed that, *Ratha Yatras* once being celebrated at Konarka or now being celebrated at any other holy place of the Hindus are not the remnants of a Buddhist practice. The present day *Ratha Yatra* is not held imitating the Buddhist tradition rather, it is celebrated as per the tradition followed in the Vedic and the mythological ages of the pre-Buddhist period.

Chandrabhaga Snana Yatra (Chandrabhaga Bathing Festival) -

Of all the festivals celebrated at Konarka in the past, only the Chandrabhaga Festival is still being celebrated here every year. Earlier (Chapter II) it is said that the Arkatirtha of *Prachi Mahatmya* is Chandrabhaga of today.The river that was once flowing by Konarka and then at a little distance from it merged with the sea was named as

1. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra– Antiquities of Orissa – Vol. I – P. 152

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Prachi Chitrotpala in *Prachi Mahatmya*. It was later renamed as Chandrabhaga. The riverbed of Chandrabhaga has been completely filled up with sand up to a distance of four miles from the seashore and now it survives only as a small holy pond.

The Snana Yatra or the Bathing Festival at Chandrabhaga is held on the day of *Magha Shukla Saptami* (on the seventh day from the new moon day in the month of *Magha* or January - February). People coming from different places gather here in the night before the day of the festival. They spend the night celebrating and singing devotional songs and chanting hymns.The night passes by for everybody without any sleep and with their eyes fixed at the horizon waiting for the dawn to descend on Chandrabhaga. They wait eagerly for this moment to take a dip in the holy water of Chandrabhaga and make their life meaningful. In the eastern sky, as the night advances stage by stage and the stars emerge from the sea one after another, reminding everybody of the morning approaching, the devotees start to become impatient. Suddenly, the waiting comes to an end, the place resounds with the sound of chants. Everybody stands up to take a dip in the holy water of Chandrabhaga to get rid of all the sins they have committed in life. People gathered there take a dip in the sacred pond chanting the hymn (mantra)* in many different ways to attain peace in their souls.

Everybody stands up on the beach to witness the rising Sun and giving it a standing ovation right from their hearts. Today's Sun is not like the rising Sun of the other days. Today, the Sun rises to give a lot of hope and consolation in the minds of the people on this planet. Every day, the sun rises from behind the trees or the mountains, and on some other days from within the thick clouds to project its heat and light all around on this earth. Today, it is not like that. Today the Sun jumps out of the vast sea with a bright and cool appearance and a benevolent heart to pour a cool potion in the lives of the pilgrims of Chandrabhaga. The intense prayer offered from the core of the heart of the pilgrims makes the Sun to rise today putting up a gorgeous appearance. Today, with a standing ovation accompanied by loud and emotional chanting of hymns and praises, everybody prays to the Sun to appear before them. The reverberating sound of these sacred hymns chanted by the pilgrims suppresses even the roaring noise produced by the waves of the sea. Today, the heavy and deep sound of the sea is unable to break the enthusiasm, concentration and devotion of the gathered pilgrims. Finally the waiting comes to an end. Soon on the other side of the sea a red line emerges. Its rays start to kiss the ruined monument of Konarka. The scene resounds with the heart throbbing chanting of *"Jay Suryanarayana Jay"* by the pilgrims. Then suddenly the sea throws the red ball of the Sun towards the pilgrims. Instantly, the earth and the sky get painted with its golden yellow rays and Konarka, in its ruined state, looks as if it is reborn in pristine condition. The pilgrims take a dip in Chandrabhaga and worship the Sun. Lastly, they run to Konarka with a hope to see its new attire only to return home disappointed and with tearful eyes. In the past, the pilgrims used to worship the Sun God in Konarka temple after returning from Chandrabhaga. Presently, no other worships or rituals are conducted here except the worship of the *Nabagraha*. On the day of the festival a number of shops open at Konarka to create a temporary market for the pilgrims.

In the past, the gods and the goddesses of the place were being united at Chandrabhaga for the festival. Even today, out of the *Astashambhu* (the eight *Mahadevas* protecting the holy zone), Tribenishwara and Ishaneshwara, etc. are still visiting the holy place every year during this festival. Except at Konarka, the Chandrabhaga festival is not celebrated at any other place. Only, on this day in Bhubaneswar, Chandrasekhar, the representative deity of Lingaraja comes to the temple of Bhaskareshwara for a visit. The Sun God of Konarka has also two representative deities in the name of Surya (the Sun) and Chandra (the Moon). These two images are made of metal and are now being worshipped along with the Sun God in the temple of Indra inside the compound of Jagannatha temple in Puri. Hence, most likely, these two representative images of the Sun God were also travelling to holy Chandrabhaga on the day of the festival. Since, on the day of Chandrabhaga Festival some rituals are also being observed in Bhubaneswar, as the one mentioned above, it is assumed that the place Chandrabhaga had some relation with the Shaiva sect. In fact, the rising sun in the southeast direction is mentioned as Shiva in certain epics. Probably, for this reason, later, when a centre for the Shaivites was established in Bhubaneswar, a festival similar to that of Chandrabhaga was also started there.

There is no easy way to determine the time the festival at Chandrabhaga was started. It is mentioned in Chapter-I of the book that Shamba while taking a bath in the River Chandrabhaga found an image of the Sun God sitting in lotus pose and he was cured of the disease of leprosy by offering prayers to the Sun God there. It is also

*FOOT NOTE: Verses written in Sanskrit language – (Transliterated version)–
Janani Sarba Vutanam Saptami Sapta Suptike
Sarba Byahrutike Debi Namaste Rabimandale.......- Chandrabhaga Snana Mantra - (Appendix – II, Sl. No. 24)

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said that Shamba was contemporary to Parikshita belonging approximately to 1900 BC. However, it cannot be assumed that Chandrabhaga festival started from this time as the place was a deep forest then and it must have taken many years for the place to become popular as a holy spot. As per Bishan Swarup, as there is no mention of this festival in *Brahma Purana* and *Kapila Samhita*, probably it started after these two great epics were created.[1] However, the descriptions about the significance of the holy places extracted from these two epics and written by him somewhere else, mentions about the holy place of Arkatirtha.[2] The *Brahma Purana* instructs to offer worship to the ancestors and to the Sun God after taking a bath in the holy River Chandrabhaga on the day of *Magha Shukla Saptami* (on the seventh day from the new moon day in the month of *Magha* or January - February). The religious importance of Surya Ganga also has been described here. It cannot be said that Surya Ganga was not ever a part of River Chandrabhaga. It is clearly written in *Kapila Samhita* that, he, who takes a dip in the River Chandrabhaga as per the tradition, will move to *Chandraloka* (abode of the moon) with a body like the moon. Bishan Swarup has extracted information about the importance of Konarka from *Kapila Samhita* and mentioned about it including that of Chandrabhaga in his book. However, in the next page of his book he expresses with confidence that there is no mention of Chandrabhaga in *Kapila Samhita*. *Kapila Samhita* belongs to a period later to *Brahma Purana*. There is no doubt that the holiness of Chandrabhaga was determined even before the epic *Brahma Purana* was written. Some assume that *Brahma Purana* was written in the 8th Century AD or even before that. Hence, it can be said that Chandrabhaga was declared as a holy river before the 7th or 8th Century AD, i.e., before *Brahma Purana* originated. From the procedure described to be followed while taking a dip in Chandrabhaga it is clearly understood that it has some special relationship with the Sun. The chant created for the purpose is meant only for the Sun. Hence, it would not be irrational to infer that, when the Sun transits to a special position in its orbit or transforms itself to a special state during the year, the festival is observed at Chandrabhaga. In the last part of the previous chapter Bishan Swarup's effort to determine the construction time of the temple at Konarka with the help of astrology has been discussed. It is also proved there that, rather the time of start of the Chandrabhaga festival may be determined by applying Bishan Swarup's method than to determine the construction time of the temple at Konarka. Bishan Swarup says that, the Sun was clearly visible from this place when it was rising from the sea exactly at 45 degrees, that is, from the southeast direction. The Chandrabhaga festival was started at this time and the Sun was rising on the *Magha Shukla Saptami* (on the seventh day from the new moon day in the month of *Magha* or January - February) exactly in the southeast direction. Because of the precession of equinoxes the Sun is not rising on this day of *Magha Shukla Saptami* from that angle anymore and has moved to 27½ degrees of the zodiac sign of Capricorn. Bishan Swarup, to calculate that the festival of Chandrabhaga started 1050 years ago, has assumed *Magha Shukla Saptami* as the 10th of February and the period taken for 1 degree of precession of equinoxes as 60 years.

It is stated in the previous chapter that it is wrong to take 60 years as the period required for 1-degree precession of equinoxes. As per astrology it moves by 50.24 seconds in a year or 1 degree in 72 years. To clear my doubts I had a discussion with my esteemed Professor Raybahadur Jogesh Chandra Ray Vidyanidhi regarding Bishan Swarup's astrological calculations. According to the letter[3] he wrote me in response to my inquiry that, the astrological evidence stated by Bishan Swarup is imaginary and inaccurate.

Hence, the Sun was never seen rising exactly from the southeast corner in India, not now and not in the past, no matter how far we move back in time. Hence it is quite imaginary to state that, at any time in the past, the sun did rise exactly from the southeast corner (45 degrees south of the east direction) on the day of *Magha Shukla Saptami*.

It is assumed from the name Konarka that the place has some relationship with the movement and the place of the rising of the Sun. It is also evident from the traditional procedure of taking the holy dip in the Chandrabhaga. Probably the Chandrabhaga festival was started when the Sun was rising from a particular angle. From Konarka, on the day of *Magha Shukla Saptami* it is impossible for the Sun to rise from a place nearer to any other corner than the southeast corner. It has also been said earlier that the Sun was never seen rising from exactly the southeast

1. Bishan Swarup – Konark – P. 45
2. Ibd – P.P. 40 – 42
3. Professor J. C. Ray thus writes, "A little consideration will show that such (the sun-rising in the *Agnikona* or south-east corner, i.e., 45 degrees to the South from the East) could never have been the case. No one could ever see the sunrise due S-E from any place in India, not to speak of Orissa. Therefore, either it was not true *Agnikona* or it was not any place in India. If Mr. Swarup has based his calculation entirely on his *Agnikona* theory, it is wrong.

If it is not true *Agnikona* which I think was not meant, then the only possible explanation is that the Sun had to be seen to rise on the day when he has reached the southern limit of his course, i.e., at the end of his *Dakshinayana* and beginning of his *Uttarayana*. We know that this happened on the 7th day of the bright half of *Magha* long long ago." - Prof. J. C. Ray

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angle. Hence as per the opinion expressed by Professor Ray in his letter, the day when the Sun was rising near the south-east corner, that is, the day the Sun reaches its southern limit or completes its *Dakshinayana* and begins to move towards the north or starts its *Uttarayana*, the festival of Chandrabhaga was being celebrated. It is seen that the residents of different countries located in the northern globe begin to celebrate different festivals as per their traditions and religions soon after the Sun moves towards north in its course after completing its southward journey. It is quite natural, because one very well realises the necessity of the sunshine during the winter. Hence, it is not a matter of less joy for the human beings to bathe in the useful rays of the sun. It is even quite natural for the Indians, who are the worshippers of the Sun since the ancient days, to celebrate the day with a great festival. It is not impossible for the persons who joyfully celebrate even the return of the Sun after a short absence during the solar eclipse (described in the Indian Astronomy as the Sun freed from the clutches of Rahu) to celebrate the return of the Sun after completing his yearly southwards travel by taking bath, etc. The Chandrabhaga festival was being celebrated in honour of the beginning of the return of Sun after completing its annual southward journey. On the day, after the Sun completes its southward journey, from Chandrabhaga it appears to be rising near the southeast corner creating a beautiful scene. On this morning, the people present there welcome the Sun chanting mantras while taking a dip in Chandrabhaga. Hence, it is believed that, the Chandrabhaga Bathing Festival is observed to mark the day of the beginning of the northward journey of the Sun. Again, Chandrabhaga Festival started on the day of *Magha Shukla Saptami*, because may be at some period of time the start of the northward journey of the Sun after completion of its southward journey coincided with this day. Professor Ray also expresses similar opinion in his letter mentioned earlier. Considering all these factors, it now becomes a little easier to determine the time of the start of the festival at Chandrabhaga. As per modern western calculations, the southward journey of the Sun ends on 21st of December and the northward journey starts on the 22nd of December. Hence, the Chandrabhaga festival started on the day on which *Magha Shukla Saptami* coincided with 22nd of December. The difference in days between these two events increased gradually with time due to precession of equinoxes. It is not possible for the lunar months to synchronise with the solar months eternally as there is a difference between the periods of the two. At the time of writing his book Bishan Swarup has taken 10th of February as the day of *Magha Shukla Saptami*. However, during the last five years, the *Magha Shukla Saptami* was celebrated on a day between 22nd January and 13th February.

In this situation the 30th January or the 31st January can be taken approximately as the day of *Magha Shukla Saptami*.* Hence, because of the precession of equinoxes now there is a difference of around 40 days between the date 22nd December and the day of *Magha Shukla Saptami*. It can be assumed that one day of precession of equinoxes is equal to one degree. It is also described in the previous chapter that it takes 72 years for 1 degree of precession of equinoxes and not, as stated by Bishan Swarup, 60 years. Hence the time taken for 40 degrees of precession of equinoxes is (72 years x 40 =) 2880 years or about 2900 years. Therefore, 2900 years ago or in the 10th Century BC, the northward journey of the Sun started on the day of *Magha Shukla Saptami*. Hence, the Chandrabhaga Festival was started on the day of *Magha Shukla Saptami* sometime in the 10th Century BC.

Lastly, in this context, here comes to the mind the event of Shamba installing the Sun God in Maitreya Bana. At the end of the Chapter-I, it is stated that in the 19th Century BC, Shamba found the image of the Sun God while taking a bath in the River Chandrabhaga and installed it there. He was cured of the disease of leprosy by taking a bath in Chandrabhaga and praying to the Sun God in Maitreya Bana. The holiness of Chandrabhaga was discovered by Shamba in 19th Century BC. However, as it was located inside a deep forest, it must have taken ages to get the message across the people about the holiness of the river. Hence, taking all these facts in to account it is believed that the time of start of Chandrabhaga festival is 10th Century BC as decided now and the time of Shamba bathing in the River Chandrabhaga as described in Chapter-I is 19th Century BC and both the facts are possibly true.

***FOOT NOTE:** *Magha Shukla Saptami* was celebrated on the following dates in the years indicated: -

Year →	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917
Date of *Magha Shukla Saptami* →	January 2	February 13	February 02	January 22	February 10	January 29

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ALASHA KANYA (FEMALE BEAUTY)



A PORTION OF THE WALL OF NATYA MANDIRA

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CHAPTER XI

IS KONARKA A BUDDHIST MONUMENT?

It is believed that, in the past, a major Buddhist centre existed near Konarka (Chapter-III). The city of Chitrotpala or Hiuen Tsang's Chelitota was located here. In the Buddhist age Chitrotpala was known as Dantapura, and before that as Odantapura. Konarka was known as *Padmakshetra* or the Sacred Lotus Zone. If the story about Gayasura (the demon) is believed to be true, then it may be assumed that the influence of the Buddhists in Konarka was immense at the time. It is described in *Purushottama Mahatmya* that there was a fierce fight between Vishnu and Gayasura. The pundits are of the opinion that, the Buddhist religion was imagined as a demon in the name of Gayasura with whom Vishnu had a fierce fight to save the Vaishnav sect. In the fight Gayasura was killed and Vishnu installed a Conch in Puri, a Discus in Bhubaneswar, a Mace in Jajpur, a Lotus in Konarka and his footprint in Gaya as memorials of his victory. If there is any truth in the episode of Gayasura, then it may be inferred that, Konarka was a Buddhist centre like Puri and Gaya before it was known as Padma Kshetra.

Referring to the episode of Gayasura, Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra and other learned people assume that, in India Buddhism was at its peak in the 12th and the 13th Century, that is, before the advent of the Vaishnav sect. However, examining the time period of the preachers of Vaishnavism and the nature of the preached religion, this assumption does not seem to be true. Rather than going against Buddhism, the prophets like Ramananda and Ramanuja preached the act of devotion and love to save the Hindus from the aggression of the Muslims. In fact, Buddhism was totally wiped out of India due to preaching of Saivism by the prophets like Kumaril and Shankar. Hence, the assumption made by Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra and others, referring to the episode of Gayasura that, Buddhism was wiped out by Vaishnavism is not right. In other words, if there is any truth in the story of Gayasura, then it would be proper to assume that, the victory of Vishnu over Gayasura rather confirms the fact that the Hindu religion was re-established in general rather than establishment of Vaishnavism in particular. In fact, Hinduism being preached in the form of Shaivism wiped out Buddhism from India.

The episode on Gayasura gives us quite a bit of information about the various sects of the Hindu religion. There is no religion in this world having so many sects and divisions like those in Hindu religion. Still then, there were no differences or violence occurring among its different sects. However, the independence maintained by each sect from the others was quite apparent to the outsiders. The Shaiva worshipped Shiva, the Vaishnavworshipped Vishnu, and the Shakta worshipped Shakti, as their prime gods within each different sects. Even then, there was no conflict, violence or hatred among them. In spite of the existence of different sects in Hindu religion for thousands of years, there have been no serious differences or bloodshed like it happened in the European middle age history due to in-fight among different sects of the European religions. The way the Indians maintain the secular principle with respect to religion is not possible with the people of other countries of the world. Cases like the murder of Saint Bartholomew or that of the Inquisition of Spain have never happened in India. The rulers of India practiced the principle of secularism by giving free and equal status to all religions and sects and made India the home of all types of religions, sects and doctrines. That is why Sankaracharya being a Shaiva himself and a preacher of Shaivaism, has also created mantras for Vishnu, Shakti, Ganapati and other gods and goddesses of Hindu religion. The series of mantras written by him includes as many chants about Shiva as those about Vishnu, Durga, Ganapati, Ganga and others. Even today, a Hindu, no matter what sect he belongs to, is as much devoted to Jagannatha as to Shiva, Durga and Ganapati and others. Hence, after the fall of Buddhism, it is not a matter of surprise for Vishnu to have a link with the rising of Brahminical religion in the form of Shaivism. Again, Buddhişm is entirely different in many aspects from Hinduism. In that light, the differences in the principles of Shaivism and Vaishnavism are negligible.

The brother-hood and benevolence that existed among the different sects of the Brahminical religion were not expected to exist between Brahmins and the Buddhists. Of course, there was no violence or bloodshed between the two religions, but there were feelings of opposition between the Buddhists and the Hindus or the Brahmins. There was a hell and heaven difference between the two philosophies or between Shankar (Shaiva) and Buddha. Shankar is absolutely unique, eternal and Brahma. According to this philosophy, only Brahma is real and the entire universe is variable, apparent and unreal. On the other hand, as per Buddhist philosophy, the variable

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nature of the universe is true, but Brahma and soul are all false concepts. In this universe, nothing is true except its variable or the continuously changing nature. Hence, in spite of the secular and benevolent tradition of the Indian people, it is quite natural for the Hindus or the Shaivites to oppose the Buddhist philosophy. The rulers of India, in spite of being Brahmins or Buddhists individually, had equal respect for both the religions. The rulers of Gupta dynasty, being followers of Brahminical religion themselves, were extending love, affection, and respect to the Buddhists. Likewise, Emperor Harshabardhana, being a Buddhist himself had also equal respect for the Brahmins.

The nature of the human being is to imitate, and the limit to which it imitates depends on the environment around him. When attacked by another religion having a strong presence aided by the sponsorship of a ruler, it is quite natural for a religion with comparatively weaker presence to imitate certain aspects of the attacking religion to revitalise its existence. Otherwise, the weaker religion may not exist for long depending only on its own principles. The Muslim religion had a very strong presence for about 600 years in India under the continued sponsorship of the rulers. During this period, it is doubtful that such aggressive and engulfing power had ever been acquired by any other religion in the world, not even Buddhism. Hence, certain aspects of the Muslim religion had to be incorporated in to the Brahminical or Hindu religion to save it from disaster. Of course Buddhism, with the sponsorship of the rulers, had a strong presence in the country for about 500 years. However, it was not the principle of the Buddhists to forcibly convert the people belonging to Brahminical religion to Buddhism as the Buddhist rulers had also equal respect for the Brahmins. In certain specific cases where the Buddhist rulers opposed and oppressed the Brahmins, and were determined to develop their own religion only had opened the path for destruction of their own religion and kingdom. Ashoka stands as a prominent example in this respect. Hence, as the Brahmins and the Buddhists were enjoying equal status in the society, it was not likely for any one of them to imitate or adopt any aspect from the other. On the contrary, there was a feeling of stiff opposition between the Hindu and the Muslim religions and the Hindus were being very much oppressed by the Muslims. Hence, had the Hindus not adopted certain practices of the Muslims it would have been difficult for them to survive. On the other hand, it was not necessary to incorporate certain aspects of Buddhism into Hinduism, as there was not so much opposition and differences expressed by the Buddhists towards the Hindus in any period except during the rule of Emperor Ashoka. Of course, as both Hinduism and Buddhism existed side by side for quite a long period, maintaining their independence from each other, it is not impossible for one to unconsciously adopt certain practices from the other. At times, secret exchanges are made even between the opposite parties. Hence, the Brahmins might have adopted certain customs and traditions of the Buddhists unconsciously, though it seems impossible for the Brahminical religion to have consciously adopted any tradition of Buddhism in absolute terms.

Konarka has remained as a major centre for Hindu religion since the ancient days of Maitreya Bana to the present times. As per Hiuen Tsang's descriptions, even when there was a major influence of Buddhism at Konarka, then also the Brahmins worshipped there as per their own customs and traditions. Gradually, the influence of the Buddhists at Konarka declined and with it the influence of Hinduism increased. As the influence of Buddhism dropped to a negligible level, the remaining Buddhist institutions also vanished in due course of time. Even if there remained any residual influence of Buddhism at Konarka, it was so negligible that it was not at all noticeable. Hence, those who see Konarka temple as a remnant of a Buddhist monument need to be extensively discussed here.

Thinking about the writers who subscribe to the above statement, Bishan Swarup comes first to the mind. He is not satisfied with expressing that only some special rituals or festivals conducted at Konarka temple are of Buddhist nature. He rather tries to prove that, right from the origin of Konarka to its final state, from the car festival to the Konarka Deba himself, belong to the Buddhists and practices followed there are drawn from the Buddhist traditions.[1] Earlier in Chapter-I it is said that, before the origin of the name Konarka, the place was known as Maitreya Bana or Miatra Bana. Bishan Swarup says that one of the childhood names of Buddha was Maitreya (Miteya in Pali language). Hence in its initial period, the place was named so after Buddha only.

With reference to *Kapila Samhita*, it is said earlier (Chapter-I & II), that, the place was named as Maitreya Bana as it originated due to the prayer and penance observed by the famous saint Maitreya. It is not possible for Buddha to have been described as Saint Maitreya in *Kapila Samhita*. It is also not right to assume that Buddha prayed at Konarka. Hence, after going through the writings in *Kapila Samhita* about the origin of the place, it is illogical to think that the place was named after Buddha. In the first chapter, the meaning of Maitreya has been explained.

1. BishanSwarup – Konark – Chapter XI

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Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra says that Shamba was cured of the dreaded disease of leprosy by offering prayers to the Sun God here and hence the name of the forest originated from the word Mitra which means friend. Again, I have said that Mitra is one of the twelve names of the Sun. Mitra or the Sun being pleased with Shamba's prayer at this location had blessed him to be cured of the disease. Hence the place was named as Maitreya Bana only with reference to one of the names of the Sun, that is, Mitra. Therefore, why is there a doubt to accept the fact that the place might have been named as Maitreya Bana after this Mitra, the Sun God? Again, who would confirm that the name Maitreya given to Buddha before his enlightenment was not given following the name of some ancient famous saint? In this situation it is wrong to think that Konarka was named in earlier times as Maitreya Bana following the name of the Buddha.

It is mentioned in Chapter-II of this book that there was a banyan tree known as *Arkabata* in the premises of Konarka. The Sun himself has appeared on the earth as this banyan tree for the benefit of all the living beings in this world. Many saints and learned persons got themselves immersed in divine thoughts sitting under this tree. Bateshwara Mahadeva installed under this tree is still being worshipped there. As per *Kapila Samhita*, a person gets his wishes fulfilled if he chants mantra of the Sun continuously for three fortnights sitting under this tree. It is said that Buddha was enlightened after meditating for 49 days without taking any food or going to sleep during this period. For this reason, finding the similarity in both the practices, Bishan Swarup says that the Hindus praying and meditating under this sacred banyan tree are actually doing so following a Buddhist practice. He further says that, the *Kalpabata* and *Arkabata* are installed at the religious places of the Hindus, imitating the *Bodhidruma* (The tree under which the Buddha meditated for enlightenment) of the Buddhists.

As said in the earlier chapter, if a tradition was started primarily by the Buddhists and it did not exist in the pre-Buddhist period, then only it could be termed as a Buddhist tradition. The traditions existing in India since the pre-Buddhist period and later adopted by the Buddhists can never be called a Buddhist tradition. Is there any novelty in Buddha meditating sitting in the shade under a banyan tree? Before Buddha, many saints and yogis meditated under the trees in the forests to acquire knowledge to use it for the betterment of the human society. Many chants of the Vedas, many epics, doctrines and philosophies were created by learned persons sitting in the cool and tranquil shades under the trees. Even before the advent of Buddha, for the last three thousand years, Indian culture, tradition, religion and the temper were being created and developed in the shades provided by the trees in the forests. Even today, the Hindu saints prefer to live in the cool shade under a tree than to live in the beautiful modern buildings. Buddha leaving behind his palace to meditate under the shade of a tree and later the Buddhists worshipping that banyan tree are only imitations of a previously existing Brahminical culture. Buddha was enlightened following the same tradition as the saints of today follow to take rest under the shady trees. There is nothing Buddhist in the act of the religious Hindus regarding the cool place under the shade of a banyan tree as divine and showing their devotion to it. Even, long before the Buddhist age, during the period Ramachandra was banished to live in the forest for twelve years, Sita (Ramachandra's wife) also had worshipped a banyan tree named *Shyamabata*. Havel says, "It is nothing unusual in a tropical country like India to worship and take so much care of the banyan tree."[1] Bishan Swarup's assumption is guided by the similarity in the two events namely, the belief of the Hindus in the fact that meditating for three fortnights under the *Arkabata* (banyan tree in Konarka) brings in success and that of the enlightenment of the Buddha happening after he meditated under the *Bodhidruma* (banyan tree) for 49 days. Of course, there is some similarity between three fortnights (45 days) and 49 days, but it is not so vital a reason to prove without any doubt that *Arkabata* was an imitated version of *Bodhidruma*. Rather, it is very common for the Hindus to relate 3 fortnights, 3 months, 7 days and 21 days, etc. to all kinds of rituals. To see the imitation or influence of Buddhism in these factors is like losing confidence in and showing ignorance about the Brahminical culture.

It is known from Hiuen Tsang's description about Chelitola (Chapter-III) that there were five Buddhist monuments on the outskirts of the city. Bishan Swarup assumes that the temple of Konarka was one of them. He states that the temple of Konarka is built like a *Ratha* and *Ratha* is one of the major favourite items of the Buddhists. He further states that, Konarka temple was first built with four wheels imitating the *Ratha* of Siddhartha and later the number of the wheels was increased to twenty-four.

In the previous chapter it is proved that *Ratha* was not a favourite with only the Buddhists. The Buddhists were celebrating *Ratha* festivals only following a favourite tradition of the pre-Buddhist period. Again, the assumption that Konarka temple was built first with four wheels imitating the *Ratha* of Siddhartha is baseless.

1. E. B. Havell – Aryan Rule in India, P.P. 109-112 and E. B. Havell – Ancient and Mediaeval Architecture of India

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It is not fair to distort the truth just to favour somebody's wrong opinion. Moreover, it is imagined since the beginning of the age of Rig Veda that, the gods and the goddesses travel riding *Rathas*. Out of all the gods and goddesses, the Sun God himself is eternally famous for his *Ratha* drawn by seven horses. In spite of so many proofs existing in the epics and the Vedas in its favour, to assume it otherwise, that the Sun God's *Ratha* was an imitation of the *Ratha* of Siddhartha is quite impossible and unreal.

Hiuen Tsang, describing about Chelitola writes that, the Brahmins and the Buddhists were living here together extending cooperation to each other.[1] Many religious Brahmins were living in this capital city and a number of temples existed here along with the Buddhist monasteries. Since about 200 years before Hiuen Tsang's visit to the Country, Buddhism had already been established as a major religion here and at the same time Bhubaneswar had also been established as a major holy place for the Shaivas. As per Hiuen Tsang's version there were temples for the Hindus at Konarka. Hence, it is not possible for the temple of Konarka to be one of the Buddhists' monuments and not of the Hindu temples existing there. It is known from *Prachi Mahatmya* that, there were many temples, monasteries, etc. existing on the banks of the River Chitrotpala. Even today, many temples are found here in ruined condition. Of course, it might be possible for certain ruins found here to be those of the Buddhist monuments existing in the past and written about by Hiuen Tsang. These Buddhist monuments were ruined with the passage of time and finally lost their existence due to lack of care after the Buddhists abandoned these institutions. To identify Konarka as a Buddhist monument is baseless and imaginary as it was built as the temple of the Sun God and as a holy centre for the Brahmanical religion.

Bishan Swarup is not satisfied with only describing certain festivals of Konarka as belonging to the Buddhist tradition. He, entangling them in his imaginary verdict, states that, Konarka Deba, the Prime God of Konarka and the temple itself belong to the Buddhists. It is said at different places in this book that after the collapse of the temple of Konarka, King Narasingha Deba-II transferred the deity of the Sun God from there to the temple of Indra located inside the compound of Jagannatha temple in Puri. Bishan Swarup says that the image of the Sun God actually is the image of Buddha, and the ruined temple seen now at the south-western corner of the collapsed main temple inside the compound of Konarka is the temple of Mayadevi, the mother of Buddha. Hence, as per Bishan Swarup's opinion Buddha was being worshipped in Konarka along with his mother. In Chapter-II and Chapter-VII it has been proved that, Ramachandi was installed in the temple located at the south-west corner inside the compound of Konarka. Since the invasion of Kalapahada, Ramachandi has been relocated in a temple near the mouth of River Liyakhia. Of course, it is true that the name of Buddha's mother was Mayadevi and she is named as Mahamaya in the Buddhist epic *Jataka*. It is a tradition of the Hindus to name their children after the names of the gods and goddesses. The name of Buddha's mother was Mayadevi or Mahamaya even before the birth of Buddha as her parents had named their daughter as Mayadevi following a contemporary Brahminical tradition. At the time of the birth of Buddha his parents would have never thought that one day their new-born baby would create a new religion for putting an end to the Brahminical religion. Hence, it is at least clear from this fact that, even before the birth of Buddha, there was certainly a goddess in the name of Mayadevi or Mahamaya and these names were quite famous among the parents in India.

The names like Maya and Mahamaya are still popular now as they were in the pre-Buddhist period. At some places goddess Durga is installed as Mahamaya. Since the Vedic age, Uma or Durga, the consort of Shiva, has been accepted as a goddess in the Brahminical religion. In Rig Veda, the cause of evolution is imagined as the God's association with a female power *(Stree Shakti)*. Later, the Sham Veda states that, 'The God was not interested to live alone. He wished the company of someone else. Soon after he wished, he was transformed in to two persons, one male and the other female and with their association, was started the process of pro-creation in the universe.' Later, in the Brahminical religion and the *Vedas*, this female power was described as Uma, Saraswati, etc. In Vedanta, this Shakti has been again imagined as Maya. Maya is the prime cause of creation and without Maya, Brahma is powerless and unconcerned. The power of Brahma emerges on his union with Maya and thus the universe is created. The Maya of Vedanta is named as *Prakruti* in *Sankhyadarshana*. Without *Prakruti* the male is powerless and hence the creation of all the living beings in the universe is impossible. In *Tantra* this *Adya Shakti* (prime power) is imagined as *Astamatruka* (the eight primary mothers) and like the Christians' Mari holding a baby in her lap, these *Astamatruka* or the eight female figures are seen each holding a baby in their laps. As per the philosophy of *Tantra*, it is an example of the process of procreation. As per Shankar Vijay, Shakti is the power of Shiva and without Shakti Shiva is powerless. Without Shakti, Shiva is not even able to

1. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra – Antiquities of Orissa – Vol. I – P. 136

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move a straw *(Truna Chalana Kriya)*. Hence Shakti is the cause of Shiva. "Out of all the eternal objects Shakti is the most eternal in nature". Hence, Uma, Maya, Prakruti, Shakti, etc. are only different names given to the prime goddess. In *Sri Chandi* it is described that the entire energy of the universe is congregated in Shakti. Brahma, after offering a prayer to *Chandi*, named her as Mahamaya, Mahavidya, etc.[1] The responsibility of creation, existence and maintenance of the universe is bestowed up on these goddesses. Hence, even before the age of Buddha, the Brahmins used to worship the goddesses as Mahamaya or Mayadevi. Therefore, following a Hindu tradition, Buddha's mother was named as Mayadevi or Mahamaya after this goddess of the same name. Those who do not consider Buddha historical person, they try to prove Buddha's mother to be *Prakruti* of *Sankhyadarshan* or Maya of Vedanta. After considering all these evidences, it is clear that, Bishan Swarup, due to his ignorance, expressed that the Hindus did not have any goddess in the name of Mayadevi and hence Mayadevi of Konarka was none other than the mother of Buddha. Such baseless assumption seems proper only to the person who tries to analyse the ancient Brahminical religion taking only the *Jataka* of the Buddhists as reference.

Bishan Swarup made another seriously wrong statement by assuming the deity of Konarka Deba or Suryanarayana as the image of Buddha. The image of Suryanarayana belonging to Konarka is now installed and worshipped in the temple of Indra located inside the compound of the temple of Jagannatha in Puri. On both the sides of the throne, inside this main temple or *Vimana* are installed two metal images of the Sun and the Moon. There is a lotus on each hand of both the images. The priests say that, the right side image is made of an alloy of eight different metals *(Astadhatu)*. In between the two images, on a slightly raised platform, is installed the deity of the Sun God. Seven horses have been carved on the platform which carries the deity of the Sun. The deity is not as elegantly carved as the other images of Suryanarayana at Konarka temple. Bishan Swarup says that this deity is not the one that was brought in from Konarka. There is another deity of black granite, bigger in size, placed behind this image. Bishan Swarup assumes this bigger image to have been brought in from Konarka. His argument is that, the image placed at the front is not as beautifully sculpted as the others in Konarka are. The dimension of the image placed at the backside matches with that of the upper platform built inside the main temple of Konarka and hence, Bishan Swarup assumes this image to have been brought from Konarka and it is an image of Buddha.

Of course, as stated above, the quality of this image of Suryanarayana is not comparable to that of those at Konarka. However, for this reason only, rejecting the deity as not belonging to Konarka is not right and can be considered as an act of ignorance. The present temple of Konarka was constructed by King Narasingha Deba in the year 1278 AD. Hence, the images for this temple were sculpted during this period only when the temple architecture and skill of the sculptors in Odisha were at the highest level. However, worship of the Sun God at Konarka did not start with consecration of the present temple. Even, long before that Purandara Keshari had built a temple there for worship of the Sun God. The King, Narasingha Deba built the present temple at Konarka only to replace this ruined earlier temple. It has also been said at many places that the tradition of worshipping the Sun God at Konarka was present even before the time of Purandara Keshari. It would be unwise to say that the presiding deity of the temple was replaced with a newly sculpted one every time a new temple was constructed to replace the ruined one. It also seems quite unconventional to do so. Again, for example, there is no comparison of the artistic skill applied to the image of Jagannatha to that of the Jagannatha temple. Hence, for this reason only, stating that the image of Jagannatha does not belong to the Jagannatha temple, and so is the image of Satyabadi to the Satyabadi temple, is quite a baseless argument. The image placed behind the deity of the Sun is comparatively more beautiful. However, it is not comparable to the beauty of the image of the Sun installed as *Parshwa Devata* on the west side of the Ramachandi temple (1st Image described in Chapter-VIII – Page 146). Moreover, this deity is a bit larger to fit in properly to the platform made on the throne inside the main temple of Konarka. Rather, the size of the deity of the Sun placed in front matches with the impression found on the platform of the throne created by the deity once installed on it. Again, there is no reason to identify the image

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1. Verses written in Sanskrit language – (Transliterated version)–
   Twameba Sa Twam Sabitri Twam Debi janani Para
   Twayeiba Dharjyate Sarbam (Twayeitadhharjyatebishwam)
   Twayeitat Srujyate Jagat (75)
   Twayeitat Palyate Debi Twamaschyante Ch sarbada
   Bisrusthou Srusti Rupatwam Sthhitirupa Ta Palane (76)
   Tatha Samhruti Rupante Jagatosya Jagnmaye
   Mahabidya, Mahamaya, Mahamedha, Mahasmrutih (77)
   x x x x x x x x
   Paraparanam Parama Twameba Parameshwari
   Jacha Kinchit Kwachit Bastu Sadasada Ba Khilatmike (82)
   Tasya Sarbasya Ja Shakti SatwamnkiStuyese Tada"........ *Sri Chandi* – 1st *Charitra* – 1st *Mahatmya*- (Appendix – II, Sl. No. 25)

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at the back as that of Buddha. Not only Bishan Swarup, Manomohan Ganguli has also identified it as the image of Buddha.[1] The priests say and the *Kshetramahatmya* describes it as the deity of Indra and he is worshipped with chants written for Indra only. There is no proof to establish it as the image of Buddha. Just some resemblance of its appearance to that of Buddha is not enough to confirm such identification. All the images of Buddha we see today were built in a much later period, many years after Buddha's death. Nobody sculpted Buddha's image when he was alive, having him in his front. All these images are the products of imagination of the sculptors and the artists. The images of the Sun now existing at Konarka also appear as the images of Buddha to some extent. The images of Buddha were also made the same way the images of the Hindu gods and goddesses were given shapes, that is, through imagination only. The sculptors had never seen Buddha in person before sculpting any of his images, and in the same way, nobody has ever seen Indra before sculpting his image. Hence, it is not unusual to identify the image of Indra as that of Buddha. In fact, the placement of *Apsara* (Divine female beauties) and other images of some gods and goddesses on both sides of the deity reconfirms that it is not the image of Buddha. The main witness in this regard is Rakhal Das Banarjee who, in replying to my query, wrote to me in a letter as stated below –

"...... I can assure you that the Sun God of Konarka is not a Buddha image. The god in the compound of the Great Temple at Puri (i.e. the image of Indra) is not a Buddha image. It is true that some Buddha and Bodhisathya images have crowns, but I can assure you, that the image in question is not Buddhist."

- Calcutta, Sept. 25, 1916

Babu Rakhal Das Banerjee,
Asst. Superintendent of the Archaeological Survey of India

The pundits say that, the Brahminical religion had adopted certain aspects of Buddhism to make it more stable and to save it from the invasion of Buddhism. Had it been a fact, then the influence of Buddhism on the Brahminical religion would have been noticeable. If it was not so, and the influence of Buddhism on it was not noticeable, then the goal of saving it from the attack of Buddhism by fooling them with this procedure was not achieved. In spite of all the differences between Jagannatha and Buddha, it is so widely and openly known that Buddha, like Jagannatha, is an incarnation or avatar of Vishnu. The deity described above is never considered by anybody as an image of Buddha. Rather, the deity is clearly identified and worshipped as Indra chanting mantra meant only for Indra. In this situation, it is meaningless to assume that the Brahmins, to save themselves from the attack of the Buddhists adopted Buddhist traditions by worshipping the image of Buddha as Indra. Hence, it can be said that Bishan Swarup moving on a wrong path eventually lost his destination. Bishan Swarup states that, as per *Amarkosh*, the other name of Buddha is *Arkabandhu*. On exploring the meaning of Konarka, it is understood that, Kona means the corner and Arka means the Sun and the place was named after Konarka Deba (Sun God). It is also described as *Konakona* in the 87th *Shloka* (Stanza) of the copper plate inscription of King Narasingha Deba-II. Again, as one of the names of Buddha is *Konagamana* or *Konakamana*, Bishan Swarup explains that Konarka is only a name variant of Buddha and the worship there was being conducted as per the Buddhist traditions in lieu of the Hindu rituals.

The way Bishan Swarup finds the meaning of Konarka proves his intellectual act, but the meaning of Konarka as explained by him is not incontrovertible. The usual and simple meaning of the word Konarka is the combination of two words namely, *Kona* and *Arka* (corner and the Sun). Some explain that, since the place of *Arka Deba* (Sun God) is located in the north-east corner of Puri it was named as Konarka. Some also say that, the place is named as Konarka as the Sun is first visible to this place when it rises from the sea after entering the south-east corner. At some other place Bishan Swarup has also explained the naming of the place following the above-mentioned statement. Bishan Swarup says that, in the south-east corner, Surya or the Sun assumes the form of Shiva and Konarka is a holy place for the Shaivas. While determining the construction time of Konarka temple he had expressed such opinion. Hence, it is quite unusual for him to express a different opinion now in order to prove his own assumption of the image of Konarka Deba as the image of Buddha. In the epics, the place is described as *Ravikshetra* and *Suryakshetra*, etc. and even in *Prachi Mahatmya*; it is everywhere described as *Arkakshetra* and not even once as Konarka. Konarka is only a name given to it locally. Hence, it does not seem possible that such a deep meaning was involved in just a locally given name. Again, it is not understood what relationship of the meaning of *Konagamana* is with that of *Konakona*. It rather shows the favouritism extended towards the Buddhists by such opinion holders than their inquisitiveness to find the real history. Even if, for the sake of argument,

1. Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P. 429

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Mayadevi is identified as the mother of Buddha and Konarka Deba as Buddha himself, it seems impossible for the Brahminical religion to have so openly adopted Buddhism to such an extent. Such worship is not so openly conducted at any religious centre of the Brahmins in India. Of course, some say that Jagannatha is an incarnation of Buddha and some others oppose it. Epics like *Brahma Purana* do not accept Jagannatha to be an incarnation of Buddha. *Brahma Purana* belongs to the 8th Century AD. Hence, Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra and others think that the notion of Jagannatha as an incarnation of Buddha was imagined after the 8th Century AD, that is, after *Brahma Purana* was created.

Konarka was established before the 8th Century AD. It seems impossible to imagine that, even before the prime god of the Hindu kingdom was considered as an incarnation of Buddha, the Brahmins had started to worship Buddha at Konarka.[1] After the 8th Century AD, that is, after the victory of Shankaracharya in bringing the Brahminical or Hindu religion back to its prime position, the Buddhist influence on the people was negligible and hence, it was not necessary for the Brahmins to adopt the Buddhist traditions into their religion.[2] Even if it is accepted that Jagannatha is an incarnation of Buddha, adoption of Buddhism into Jagannatha cult is not so clearly apparent. There is no similarity of Buddha with the name and the appearance of Jagannatha. People are usually attracted by the name and the appearance of the gods and goddesses rather than their far-reaching historical significance. Hence, it is quite impossible and unusual for the image of Buddha and that of her mother Mayadevi to have been so openly worshipped in Konarka. Of course, it might have been possible for the sculptors to have been influenced by Buddhism and some images, at some places of Konarka temple might have been sculpted as per the Buddhist tradition. However, the assumption of Buddha as the presiding deity of Konarka and presence of Buddha's mother Mayadevi as the prime goddess of the place is quite unreal and unacceptable.

Bishan Swarup, referring to many events in Buddha's life described in the Buddhist epic *Jataka*, has tried to prove that some of the images are sculpted as per the Buddhist customs and traditions. A few of those images are discussed here.

First Scene - (The Teaching Scene: 5th Image of Chapter- VIII) - (Page 149)

As per Bishan Swarup's description, a king is seen sitting among the disciples as their *Guru* is teaching them. In the pre-Buddhist period, sometimes the Brahmins used to describe the stories from the epics to the kings. However, it was not a practice of the Brahmins to let everybody, from the rulers to the ruled, sit at one level while preaching. Hence, thinking that it is only possible with the Buddhists, Bishan Swarup assumes that, the teacher seen here is Buddha himself and the scene is a Buddhist scene.

Bishan Swarup's assumption and the reasoning mentioned above show his ignorance about the ancient traditions followed by the Brahmins while teaching in *Gurukul* (ancient residential school). It is known to everybody that, in the ancient days, all from the rulers to the ruled, were being treated equally while observing *Brahmacharya* (celibacy) during their stay in *Gurukula*. The *Brahmacharis* (those who observe celibacy), irrespective of their social status, like belonging to the families of the rulers or the ruled, were learning from the *Gurus* at the same time and sitting together on the same platform. This scene presents the daily affair of the Indian *Guru*kul even before the advent of Buddha. Buddha, being a prince himself, was also educated by the *Gurus* along with many other fellow pupils. *Prasenjit*, the King of *Koshala*, in a later period became a disciple of Buddha and adopted Buddhism. However, much earlier in his youth, he received his education at Takshasila.[3] In spite of all the facilities existing in the capital cities, the education of the princes and the other young persons were not considered as complete unless they studied at Takshasila after completing their education in their respective capital cities.[4] Unlike the present times, there was no special college for the princes. The rulers and the ruled, the rich and the poor, all were leading a similar lifestyle and were treated equally during the period they observed *Brahmacharya* at the *Gurukul*. As per this tradition, Buddha was initially educated by the Brahmin *Acharyas* or *Gurus* and later following the same tradition he preached his religion to the kings and the others, uniting them on one platform and at the same time. Hence, to describe the above-mentioned teaching scene as a Buddhist scene and the teacher seen therein as Buddha himself is nothing but an expression of baseless favouritism shown towards Buddhism.

1. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra – Antiquities of Orissa – Vol. II – P. 107

2. Lt. E. B. Havell – Aryan Rule In India – P. P. 131 – 139 & P. 145
("How Buddha came to be worshipped, how the idea Boddhisattwa arose and how Hindu Trinity was taken up for Buddha, Sangha and Dharma.")

3. C. A. F. Rhys Davids – Buddhist India – P. 8

4. E. B. Havell – Aryan Rule in India

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Second Scene - (King demonstrating skill with arms: 14th Image of Chapter- VIII - Page 155)

It is described in the Buddhist epic *Jataka* that once Buddha, in his pre-enlightenment days had demonstrated his skill in use of arms to his relatives or subordinates as witnesses. Hence, with this reference, Bishan Swarup describes this scene as that of Buddha. Of course there would be no doubt that Buddha in his youth would have been very much skilled in using the arms and also he might have demonstrated his skill before others. However, Buddha did not introduce this skill or used these arms for the first time. For a prince to be proficient in using arms was a tradition that existed since long, even before Buddha's time. Buddha, by being proficient in use of arms, was simply following this tradition. He did not show any novelty in this regard. At the time of showing his proficiency in arms he would have never thought of establishing a new religion to oppose that of the Brahmins. Let us examine the scene from another angle. King Narasingha Deba is the builder of the temple of Konarka. It is quite possible for the sculptors to have described certain important events that had happened in the life of the King himself through the scenes carved on the body of the temple. Quite naturally, at the first glance of it, my friends and I assumed the King in the picture to be Narasingha Deba. In praise of the King, Sterling says "His great personal strength and skill in athletic exercises seem to have invested him with a sort of supernatural character in the eyes of his subjects. ....He is said to have been of a very martial turn and to have waged a long war to the southward."[1]

Hence, it seems impossible for the sculptors to have looked for *Jataka* of the Buddhists to describe the martial skill of Buddha than to have described that of their own war hero King Narasingha Deba in this bow and arrow scene.

Third Scene - (Shesadeva: 9th Image of Chapter-VIII–Page 152)

Bishan Swarup considers this image to be that of Buddha. To explain the presence of the two female figures on both sides, he says with reference to the Buddhist *Jataka* that, two women named Sujata and Puna had once worshipped and taken care of Buddha before his enlightenment and the sculptor has placed these two figures on both sides of Buddha in their honour. Regarding the snake with the hoods, he explains that, soon after Buddha was enlightened, a severe rainstorm swept over the area and it continued for seven days. The King of the Snakes, Muchalinda protected Buddha from the rainstorm with his hoods raised above him. He has also said somewhere else that no such image is seen in the realm of the Hindu religion. The image of Hindu god Ananta (Vishnu) with the hood of the snake above his head is always seen only in sleeping pose with goddess Lakshmi (consort of Vishnu) sitting at his feet.[2] Though a similar scene might have been described in Buddhist *Jataka*, stating that, there are no such gods in Hindu religion shows only the unfamiliarity of Bishan Swarup with the Hindu epics. The scene of *Anantashayana*, shows Vishnu in sleeping pose, and sometimes in half sleep mode, with Saraswati[3] and Lakshmi both being present there. Then another scene depicting Krishna sucking his finger shows him sitting under the seven hoods of a snake and his mother standing by his side is also present at some places. However, this scene at Konarka presents Shesadeva rather than Krishna, Vishnu and others. In fact, Shesadeva is imagined to have one thousand hoods but for the convenience of sculpting or painting of the image he is usually shown with seven hoods only. Two Shakti images in the name of Ila and Urjja are always present in the form of female figurines alongside the image of Shesadeva. A beautiful image of Shesadeva of this kind is being worshipped even today in Athhagarh (a place between Cuttack and Dhenkanal). There was a great difference in the time period between the time of the story of Puna and Sujata that is extracted by Bishan Swarup from Buddhist *Jataka* and the time Buddha was protected by the King of the Snakes, Muchalinda after his enlightenment. Hence, it seems quite impossible that the sculptor of Konarka would have not considered Shesadeva of his own religion and rather have comprehended two episodes of the Buddhist *Jataka* to create this image at Konarka.

It is said earlier (Chapter -IV), while describing the plinth of the main temple that, a row of elephants have been carved on the lower platform of the plinth. From the chapters describing the temple, it is known that the elephants have been used in abundance to decorate the temple. Considering these facts and specially, (Chapter-V) the scene carved on the front of the throne placed inside the main temple where a king is seen feeding the elephant (Page 88), Bishan Swarup infers that such extensive use of elephants in the sculpture of the temple shows the Buddhist

1. **Andrew Sterling** - Orissa – P. 93
2. **Bishan Swarup** – Konark – P. 31
3. **The *Bhagabata*** – Part X – Purba Bhaga – Chapter-V

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influence on it. Before the birth of Buddha, his mother had dreamt of a white elephant entering her womb. Hence, the Buddhists consider the elephant as a very sacred animal. He also presumes that the King present in the scene feeding the elephant after taming it is the Buddha himself. The elephant may be sacred for the Buddhists, but also it is not considered less sacred by the Hindus. Indra is the King of the gods and the goddesses and his carrier is an elephant named Airabata. This universe continues to exist and the people live here happily by the grace of Airabata only as Airabata causes rain. Ganga, whose presence is so expansive in this entire universe, would not have landed on this earth without the grace shown by Airabata. Even today, at the time of certain festivals in Puri, the mahouts come riding the well-decorated elephants and people feel happy to offer coins to them by placing it on their trunks.

Apart from the religious point of view, the extensive use of the image of elephants can also be explained from another angle. The forests of Odisha have always been famous for the elephants. The Buddhist caves are also as extensively decorated with elephants as the Hindu temples in Odisha. Hence, Manomohan Ganguli has rightly said[1]-

"Orissa has been noted from time immemorial for elephants, and hence we find them abundantly sculptured. Reference to it is found in the Mahabharata; the reputation of the place for rearing of elephants reached even up to Kashmere and the farthest limits of India. I have come across a reference to it in the *Rajatarangini*, a book of the 12th century." Further, Chandragupta had defeated the Nandas with extensive use of elephants in the war. Kalidas had offered the title of *Gajasadhana* (the tamer of the elephants) to the king of Kalinga. The King of Kalinga is also known as the *Gajapati*[2] or the Master of the Elephants in the southern part of India. Hence, Odisha was always famous for the elephants and catching wild elephants, rearing and training them, using them for hunting and in the war were almost a daily enjoyment for the royals in Odisha. Was this expertise imparted to the people of Odisha by the Buddhist religion or the forests in Odisha were full of elephants and hence people learned to use them extensively? Of course, Buddha might have reared elephants in his youth as his kingdom Kapilavastu was located near the forests at the foot of the Himalayan range. However, it seems quite unnatural that the sculptors of Konarka felt so sacred about Buddha's rearing of elephants that they carved an image of it in front of the throne of Konarka Deba, whereas, the Buddhist sculptors did not sculpt a single image describing such activity of the founder of their religion in the Buddhist caves.

Of course, in some of the Buddhist caves the elephants are extensively carved, though in a different perspective. There are scenes of elephants in war fields on both the left and the right side of Rani Gumpha (Queen's Cave) showing some males and females fighting with the elephants with the mace in their hands. There are two elephants seen on both sides of the Ananta Gumpha (Ananta Cave) with an image of goddesses Lakshmi placed between them. There are two images of elephants on both sides of the stairs on the veranda of the Ganesha Gumpha (Ganesha Cave). If the elephant was so sacred for the Buddhists, then how was it, that the elephants were placed on the stairs on which people had to put their feet on to walk past? Again, nobody ever wants to kill something he adorns or worships. Then how is it that so many males and females, on both the sides of Rani Gumpha are seen fighting to kill the sacred elephants? Surely, the sacredness and the affection towards the elephants reflected in the image carved on the sides of the throne built inside the main temple of Konarka is not seen at any of these caves. There are so many images of elephants in the caves, but none shows Buddha engaged in rearing or feeding the elephants. Considering these facts, it is baseless to argue that the King with the elephant carved on the throne inside Konarka temple is Buddha himself. Rather, it would be proper to assume that the sculptor has expressed loyalty and respect to his King of supreme powers by carving an image of him with the elephant on the throne of the Sun God at Konarka. It is further confirmed by the presence of an image of the King, just above the elephant, praying before the god. Not only with this scene alone, finding Buddhist influence with any of the sculptured elephants in Konarka shows nothing but the lack of experience of the writer regarding the Hindu tradition and the natural environment in and around Odisha. If there was any reason for the Buddhists to consider the elephants so sacred, then for the Hindus and especially for the Odias there were many more reasons to consider the elephant so sacred. In this respect, there was no influence of Buddhism on the Hindu temples.

Likewise, Bishan Swarup, with his baseless assumptions, has tried to prove the influence of Buddhism on certain finer aspects of the temple at Konarka. However, it is not necessary here to discuss and prove them otherwise.

1. Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P. 74

2. E. B. Havell – Aryan Rule in India – P. P. – 348 – 349 – "Malwa Raja Husang came to Orissa for Elephants"

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Till now I have proved that the sculptural work at Konarka bears no similarity with the Buddhist style. Now it is to be proved that, what is special and proper for the Buddhist monuments and used extensively to decorate them are not found at Konarka, in other words, Konarka is very different from the Buddhist monuments in all respects. The compound walls of the Buddhist *Stupas* or monuments are usually decorated with different types of carvings. At Sanchi and other places the compound walls of the *Stupas* are carved with scenes describing the stories found in the Buddhist *Jataka*. Some other scenes found there are yet to be identified.[1] The sculptural work found on the compound walls of the Buddhist monuments are widely praised in the history of India. On the contrary, not only in Konarka, but also in case of any of the temples in Odisha, none of its compound walls bears any decoration. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra says:-

"The walls xxxxxx were invariably plain, both inside and outside in marked contrast to the Buddhist railings which are most elaborately sculptured."[2]

The prime reason for this might not be to cut down the expenditure or labour applied to the structures as the kings were unhesitatingly spending so much for development of religion. They would not have ever thought of not to spend the required amount of funds and labour to decorate the compound walls as temples were being sculpted so elaborately and they would have decorated the compound walls also had they were supposed to be done so. The compound wall of Bhubaneswar temple is completely flat and simple unlike those of the temples at Puri and Konarka which look better with the flattened dome shaped stones placed symmetrically on the top layer of the compound walls. The temple at Bhubaneswar belongs to an earlier period than that of the temples at Konarka and Puri as it was built just after the influence of Buddhism started to decline in Odisha. Had there been any Buddhist influence on the Hindu sculptural art then it would have shown off at the temple of Bhubaneswar. Hence, it is assumed that Hindu sculptors did not try to extensively adopt the Buddhist style and rather tried to keep their creations away as much as possible from its influence. Gradually, as the opposition between the two religions faded away with passage of time, the compound walls at Puri and Konarka were sculpted to make them look a little more beautiful.

From the *Bada* to the *Beki* (neck), all the major temples of Odisha are divided in to ten planes (Page 232). The Buddhist temple at Buddhagaya is also divided into a number of planes having windows in between these layers for circulation of air and ingress of light. However, the Hindu temples do not have any windows, or even a hole, on the walls at its top portion. It is heard from the priests of the temple of Bhubaneswar that somebody had once climbed up to the top plane and died there due to lack of fresh air and light. On the contrary, since there are windows at the upper level of the Buddhist temple at Buddhagaya, the ornaments, etc. are kept there without any problem. Had the Hindu sculptors wanted to imitate their Buddhist colleagues, they would have lighted the upper part with holes made on the wall of the temple. Hence, the two styles of sculpture are so different that it would not be proper to say that the sculptural work at Konarka was influenced by the Buddhist style. I have proved by the above-mentioned facts that the sculptors of Konarka have not tried to imitate any Buddhist scene or style. Since Buddhism had a strong presence here for so many years; it might have been possible for some Hindus to have adopted some Buddhist traditions. The writings of Bishan Swarup and others who show some inclination towards Buddhism give an impression as if Buddhism suddenly entered India from some other place and it was entirely different from Indian thought and tradition. Rather, it is true that, Buddhism originated from and developed by the religions, idealism, customs and traditions of India. Even though it went against the Brahminical religion, the perpetual and the basic customs and traditions of it were all present extensively in Buddhism. Those writers, who do not accept the historical personality of Buddha, say that Buddhism is based on Sankhya philosophy, Buddha himself is the Sankhyakar Kapila (Creator of Sankhya philosophy), the birthplace of Buddha is Kapilavastu or the dwelling place of Kapila and his mother Mayadevi is Prakriti or Maya of Sankhya. At least, these people should accept the truth that Buddhism did not just suddenly entered India from some other place. On the contrary it originated and developed gradually with the knowledge, religion and philosophy that existed in India since ages.[3] Rhys Davids also writes, "Buddhism was not an innovation, but grew quite out of Hinduism."[4]

1. C. A. F. Rhys Davids – Buddhist India – P. 198
2. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra – Antiquities of Orissa – Vol. - I – P. 33
3. E. B. Havell – Aryan rule in India – P.P. 50-51
4. C. A. F. Rhys Davids – Buddhism – P.P. 33-34 & P. 181

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Many of the customs and traditions perceived as belonging to the Buddhists were actually adopted by the Buddhists from the traditions and customs existing since the mythological and the Vedic ages. Hence it would not be surprising to find certain new aspects of Buddhism included in the Brahminical religion as Buddhism developed like a branch of Hinduism with the thought and philosophy of the Hindu religion.

There might have been some influence of Buddhism on certain sculpture at Konarka. However, I would say that it is imaginary and quite impossible to state, like Bishan Swarup, from the presiding deity of Konarka to the smallest and the auxiliary images, from the shape of the temple to the small traces of sculptural decoration are all linked to Buddha and is influenced by Buddhism. Bishan Swarup has himself proved that the present Konarka temple was built by the Shaiva King belonging to the Keshari dynasty (The opinion has been critically analysed earlier in Chapter-IX). Considering this opinion of Bishan Swarup, it seems even more impossible for Buddha to have been ever worshipped at Konarka as the Shaiva sect of the Hindu religion took the main part in eradicating Buddhism from India.[1] Bishan Swarup, accepting this opinion of Dr. Hunter writes, "It is therefore clear that Buddhism in Orissa was replaced everywhere by Shaivism."[2] The Shaivas were not as much benevolent towards other religions as were the Vaishnavas believing in the principles of devotion and love. Shaivism could not adopt as much from Buddhism as Vaishnavism could. As per Hunter's opinion, "Buddhism in Orissa does not appear to have possessed that power of assimilation with Siva worship which is exhibited on the slopes of the Himalayas."[3] In fact, had Vaishnavism acquired the prime preference at the time of propagation of Shaivism, then whatever Buddhist traditions have been accommodated into Vaishnavism now would have been much more. Lastly, Dr. Hunter says that, "Expiring Buddhism effected its last great compromise with Vaishnavism, and the two combined to supplant the terrors of Shaivism by a religion of beauty."[4] "Hence, it is quite clear that Shaivism did not adopt anything from Buddhism. Rather, at the time of Ashoka, Buddhism was quite a bit influenced by Hinduism."[5]

Considering the time when both Vaishnavism and Shaivism were at their peak, Shaivism did not have a need to adopt Buddhism as Buddhism was on its declining path then and was gradually losing its direction and esteem. The learned persons and the major rulers of the country renounced Buddhism and adopted Brahminical religion which made it easier for the Shaiva preachers like Shankar and others to receive favours from the rulers. Instead of uniting both the religions, they engaged themselves to eradicate Buddhism completely from this land. In fact, when Vaishnavism had the greatest influence, then Islam was the religion of the national rulers. Hence, the preachers of Vaishnavism, having no other way, had to adopt some aspects of the Muslim religion to show the similarity between the two as it was so vital for their existence at the time. However, like the Puritans, Shaivas tried to remain true and uncompromising to themselves. Till date, the Shaivas have faith in themselves and have resolutely defended their faith against later and competing religions. In this light, going along with the assumption of Bishan Swarup that, Konarka was the creation of the Shaivas, it seems quite impossible for the temple to have any Buddhist influence on it. Rakhal Das Banerjee has rightly said in the letter cited earlier -

"No Buddhistic remains have ever been found at Konarka or in the vicinity of the Arkakshetra. I have come across Jain remains at Puri and at Khandagiri but not at Bhubaneswar and Konarka. The only Buddhist remains of note in Orissa are at Naltigiri.

I hope this information will be of use to you."

—R. D. Banerjee, Calcutta, Sept. 25th 1916

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1. Dr. William Wilson Hunter-Statistical Account of Bengal-Vol. XIX-P. 81
2. Bishan Swarup-Konark-P. 6-7
3. Dr. William Wilson Hunter - Orissa-Vol. I-P. 273
4. Dr. William Wilson Hunter - Orissa - Vol. I-P. 282
5. E. B. Havell - Aryan Rule in India-P. 99

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BUDDHIST VIHAR EXCAVATED AT VILLAGE KURUMA LOCATED AT 8 KILO METERS FROM KONARKA TEMPLE



CLOSE-UP OF A BRICK CELL OF THE BUDDHIST VIHAR AT KURUMA

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THE TEMPLE AT KURUMA (NOW LOCALLY KNOWN AS THE TEMPLE OF JAMADHARMA)



Bishan Swarup considers the temple of Konarka as the remnant of a Buddhist monument. Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra strongly disagrees with him and citing Hiuen Tsang's observation states that there might have been other Buddhist monuments existing at the time around Konarka. Rakhal Das Banerjee in his letter to Pandit Mishra agrees to the fact that Konarka Temple was never a Buddhist monument. He further states that no Buddhist remains were found in the vicinity of Konarka. However, a later discovery reveals that there was a Buddhist vihara at Kuruma, a village located at eight Kilo Meters from the Sun Temple, as earlier said by Hiuen Tsang on the periphery of the city of Chitrotpala. Pandit Mishra also has said that though Konarka was never a Buddhist monument there might have been some Buddhist monuments existing nearby the temple of Konarka as at the time many monuments and institutions of all types of religion were existing side by side in that area.

ONE OF THE IMAGES NOW WORSHIPPED IN THE TEMPLE OF JAMADHARMA AT KURUMA

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THE PRIME DEITY WORSHIPPED IN THE TEMPLE OF JAMADHARMA AT KURUMA

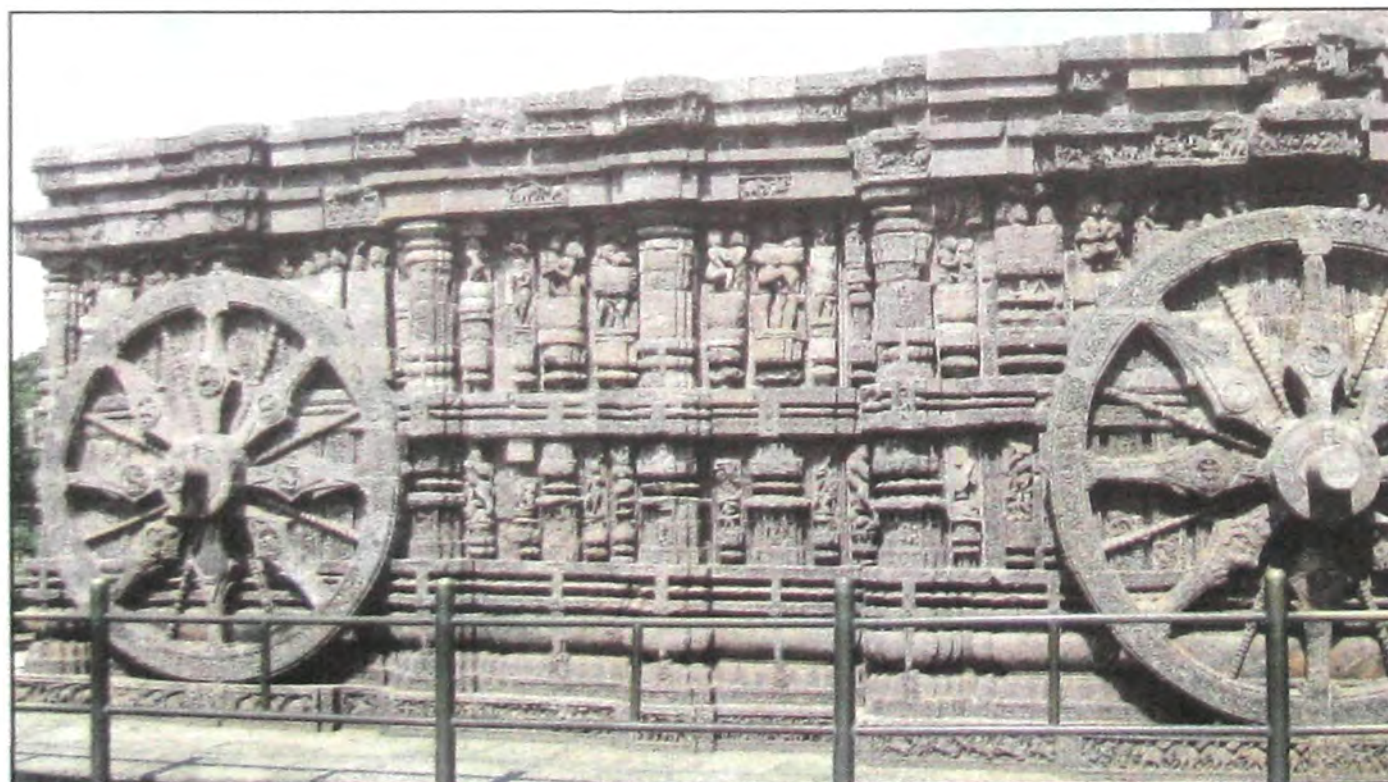
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SOME MOTIFFS LIKE BEAD-STRING, HONEY COMB, ANIMAL-CREEPER AND CREEPER-ANIMAL

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ALASHAKANYA



THE PLINTH OF THE TEMPLE COMPLEX

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CHAPTER XII

SCULPTURE AND ARCHITECTURE

The temple of Konarka is now surviving only by its ruins. Had it been standing there today with its magnificent appearance and full vigour of the undamaged condition, the visitors and the critics would have been able to fully enjoy its complete structure. As said earlier, the temple of Konarka was the biggest among all the temples in Odisha. Abul Fazl has mentioned only one temple of Odisha and that is Konarka. About Konarka he writes, "Even those whose judgement is critical and who are difficult to please stand astonished at its sight." As per another translation, Abul Fazl says, "No one can behold this immense edifice without being struck with amazement."[1] It seems from his writings that Abul Fazl himself was also charmed by Konarka though he never visited it personally and only received information about it through his reporters. To what extent the temple of Konarka was better than the other temples in Odisha is quite evident from his description. However, the present tourists to the place are unfortunate that, since it no longer exists, they cannot view its splendour. Now, standing in front of the surviving portion of the temple it is possible to enjoy the beauty of the entire temple in its full and elegant form only in an imaginary world, through the existing evidences representing the undamaged temple of the past. This is not an easy task for everybody who visits Konarka. Even then, right from Abul Fazl to the visitors of today, all have praised the beauty of the temple of Konarka. During the visit of Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra and others, the temple was under a heap of sand and stone blocks and hence they did not get a chance to make a critical analysis of the sculpture buried underneath. However, whatever is remaining there is visible now and the beauty of the surviving portion is enough to charm any critic. As Bishan Swarup says, "The temple of Konarka admittedly is the best of all the temples of Orissa. xxxxx. Its fine traceries and scrollwork, the beautiful and natural cut of its animals and human figures, all give it superiority over other temples, but the most important quality, in which it far excels the others, is its design and architectural details xxxxx. Apart from it, the specialities of Konarka temple are its style of construction and the sculpture."

The way one is amazed by the huge appearance of this magnificent temple, the same way the visitor is enchanted by the fine carvings present thereon. The visitor goes to Konarka with much enthusiasm, but while visiting and when he returns after his visit, he is very sad looking at the sculpture. The reason for this feeling is not merely the fall of the main temple. Its gigantic size, unimaginable sculptural work and the huge size of the stone blocks used in its construction make the visitor forget himself and he does not find time even to take a deep breath while thinking about the sad fate of the temple. The visitors get wonder-struck by its total gigantic appearance. In Odisha or rather in India the temple of Konarka is famous for creating a feeling of happiness and also that of remorse at the same time in the hearts and minds of its visitors looking at the fine decorative carvings the temple was once adorned with. It is famous in the whole world as one of the best examples of sculptural artwork.

Basing on Bishan Swarup's description, the specialities of the temple of Konarka are described below.[2]

Firstly, *Peetha* or Plinth of the temple: (Chapter-IV)

Such a high and huge plinth is not seen at any of the temples in Odisha. The temple at Bhubaneswar has no plinth. The *Bada* of the temple starts from the very bottom of it. The temple at Puri has a very low plinth in comparison to its height which is as good as having no plinth at all and also there is no veranda present on the plinth. Lastly, the plinth has been so unnecessarily ribbed that there seems no symmetry existing between it and the troughs and ridges created on the walls of the *Bada* of the temple by the *Pagas* or pillars. On the other hand, the plinth of Konarka temple is 16 feet and 6 inches in height and it maintains the symmetry with the troughs and the ridges created by the *Pagas* on the *Bada*. Again, on this plinth there is a veranda of width 8 feet to 12 feet running around the temple which clearly differentiates the plinth from the temple. The height, the expansiveness and the uniqueness of the plinth makes the temple appear strong and durable and at the same time its construction style captures the hearts of its visitors.

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1. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra – Antiquities of Orissa – Vol – II – P. 155
2. Bishan Swarup – Konark – P.P. 52–53

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Secondly, the Size of the temple:

The temple of Konarka has many more decorative designs than any other temple in Odisha. Even then, in spite of all the sculptural work, the uniqueness in its appearance is fully maintained. It is not known now if there is any sculptural decoration on the walls of Puri temple as it is covered with a thick layer of lime plaster. In Bhubaneswar temple, the sculptors have created many different images in different sections to the full satisfaction of the critics. However, a major defect in the Bhubaneswar temple is that the sculptors have been carried away while creating the beautiful scrolls and images and not paid any attention to the total appearance of the temple. Like the temple of Konarka, the Puri and the Bhubaneswar temples are of *Pancharatha* style, the *Pagas* on these two temples are not as distinctly visible as they are on the temple of Konarka. These two temples at Puri and Bhubaneswar are so constructed that the walls on each side of the temples, instead of being horizontally straight, are bent like an arch. In fact, the cross-section of both Bhubaneswar and the Puri temples do look more circular than rectangular in shape. It is also not known if the temple of Mukteshwara in Bhubaneswar, which is praised by Fergusson as the "Gem of Orissan architecture"[1] and by Manomohan Ganguli as "Epitome of Orissan architecture" and as "A dream in sandstone,"[2] is completely free from this type of defect. As regards this quality, Konarka temple is the best among all the temples in Odisha. The *Pagas* of this temple are placed quite apart from each other without making any compromise with its rectangular shape. T. Berry, comparing the sculptures of two countries, Egypt and India, writes that, "The sculptors of Egypt do not pay as much attention to the finer details on the individual sculpture as to the size of the monument. In spite of all the decoration, the sculptors of Egypt keep



NAGA KHAMBA (NAGA PILLAR)
A hybrid celestial image having the body of a snake up to the waist and that of a human beyond the waist

1. Dr. J. Fergusson – History of Indian and Eastern Architecture – P. 419
2. Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P. 275

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the appearance of the temple rectangular whereas the Indian sculptors get so involved in the finer details that they become indifferent to the shape of the temple. Shape of an object is the first and the most important element of its beauty. If the shape of the temple is not proper, it does not create any feelings in the mind of the spectator, in spite of being huge in size and decorated with fine carvings." As pointed out by T. Berry, the temple at Konarka is completely free from this defect. Hence, the temple of Konarka is the best temple not only in Odisha but also in India. The speciality in the shape of the Egyptian temples is present in the temple of Konarka, but the ornamental carvings of the temple in Konarka are not found in the temples of Egypt. Right from the axle pin to the largest blocks of stone are all decorated with unimaginable fine carvings. The style and the elegance seen in the sculptural work found in Konarka temple is beyond the reach of the Egyptian sculptors even in their dreams. Hence, it would not be exaggerated if we say that the temple of Konarka is much better than the temples of Egypt.


KHAKARAMUNDI*

Manomohan Ganguli has rightly said, "Konarka is a unique temple in the whole world."[1] Fergusson has also expressed, "I do not exaggerate when I say that it is (Konarka), for its size, the most richly ornamented building - externally at least - in the whole world."[2]

Thirdly, the upper *Jangha* of the *Mukhashala* or the Porch:


KHAKARAMUNDI*

It is described in Chapter-VI that *Mukhashala* or the porch is a *Pidha* temple and its *Pidha* roof has been very well projected from its *Bada*. The upper *Jangha* is usually made of *Sata Kama* or seven sections of decoration, but here the upper *Jangha* has *Dasa Kama* or ten sections. The requirement of this *Jangha* for maintaining the symmetry between the *Pidha* above and the *Bada* below is quite felt here. Of course, there is an upper *Jangha* at the *Mukhashala* of the temple of Puri, but it does not contain any decoration or its contribution for enhancing the beauty of the temple is not felt at all. The *Jangha* here is a part of the *Bada* but it does not seem to have any strong relationship with the *Pidha*. On the other hand, the upper *Jangha* of the *Mukhashala* of Konarka temple is decorated with wonderful sculptural work and it is one part that definitely enhances the beauty of the temple. The top of the *Jangha* runs around the *Mukhashala* in parallel to the plane of the *Pidha*. A number of vertical columns divide the *Bada* below the *Jangha*. These two types of sculpture are so different from each other that no similarity is found between them. Without the upper *Jangha* the *Mukhashala* would have looked a bit ugly. However, very skillfully, the sculptor has sculpted the *Jangha* so extensively between these two opposite types of carvings. Along with the troughs and ridges created by the pillars on the *Bada*, the *Jangha* has also been ribbed to maintain the symmetry with the pillars. Moreover, since it runs around the *Mukhashala* just below the *Pidha*, it appears to be a part of the *Pidha*. Hence, the variety of sculptural decoration along with the style of symmetry adopted and the play of light and shade on the walls of the temple are quite pronounced here. Practically, the *Pidha* of the temple does not look as a separate section of the temple; rather its *Jangha* makes the *Bada* and the *Pidha* of the temple to look beautiful together and also as a combined structure.


PIDHAMUNDI*

Fourthly, temples of the Auxiliary Gods (Chapter-V)

The temples of the *Parshwa Devata* (Auxiliary Gods) constructed on the three sides on the body of the main temple are found in almost all the temples of Odisha. However, these temples constructed on the three sides of the temple of Konarka are quite special in respect of enhancing the beauty of the entire temple complex.


BAJRARAMUNDI*

1. Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P. 437
2. Dr. J. Fergusson – Picturesque Illustrations of Ancient Architecture of Hindustana – P.27

*FOOT NOTE: These are the four different types of miniature temples built on to the surface of the plinth and the walls of the temples at Konarka

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The purpose of these auxiliary temples is to enhance the beauty of the main temple and at the same time add more strength and stability to the structure by providing additional support. As the *Mukhashala* makes the main temple stronger and adds to its beauty on the eastern side, the auxiliary temples serve the same purpose on the other three sides of the main temple. Without them the temple would look fragile and not so beautiful. The auxiliary temples at the temples of Puri and Bhubaneswar are quite smaller in size in proportion to the size of the main temple and hence they do not look like being an integrated vital part of the main temple. However, the auxiliary temples at Konarka were wonderfully conceived. Since, they were quite large in proportion to the size of the temple, like the *Mukhashala*, they were aiding in making the temple stronger, to look more beautiful and also at the same time they appear as integral sections of the main temple. It is a matter of pride for the sculptors of Konarka to have conceived and constructed the temple as a living body with different limbs integrated in to its structure like, *Pada, Jangha, Gandi, Mastaka*, etc.

Fifthly, the Play of Light and Shade on the temple:

The play of light and shade on almost all the ancient temples of Odisha is beautiful to observe and on the temple of Konarka it is much more prominent and wonderful. According to Fergusson, the beauty of the play of light and shadow on the temple of Konarka is the most wonderful and unique phenomenon in the whole world. Fergusson says, "There is, so far as I know, no roof in India where the same play of light and shade is obtained with an equal amount of richness and constructive propriety as in this instance, nor one that sits so gracefully on the base that supports it." To make the sculpture heart-touching it is necessary to exhibit its variety in accordance with the rule of symmetry. Without variety and only with symmetric arrangements, the sculpture looks boring to the observer on prolonged viewing. Likewise, without symmetric arrangements and only with variety makes the sculpture look unprincipled and ugly. For any sculpture, it is necessary to have both symmetry and variety, or in other words symmetric arrangements of sculptural variety as they both depend equally on each other for the purpose of enhancing the beauty of the object. In absence of one or the other, the sculpture looks meaningless and irritating. This principle has been strictly followed while planning the decoration at Konarka. For example, the creeper and the elephant motifs have been carved parallel to the ground around the temple. However, to avoid possible boredom of the spectator, the sculptor has very intelligently placed some vertical carvings of creeper motifs at equal intervals in between the two sections of horizontal carvings. Similarly, the vertical *Pagas* or the pillars of the temple are divided into many horizontal sections by the creeper motifs running around it. These sections are again subdivided into many vertical sections. In spite of all these divided sections, sub-sections and sub-sub-sections, the shape of the temple has not been lost or disfigured. The temple, even in its present ruined condition, still attracts many visitors with its wonderful symmetrical presentation of the varieties in sculptural decoration.

The play of light and shade is not as easily understood in case of the sculpture made out of a stone block as is in case of a painting made on a piece of paper. Hence, for the non-professional, the principle of symmetry and variety and the play of light and shade in Konarka are not easily comprehended. Regarding the play of light and shade and the meeting point of light and shadow on the walls of the temple, an extract of a letter written by Mr. H. H. Locke of the Government College of Art, Calcutta to Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra is stated below.[1]

"These points are so many stops in the line of light and shade; sometimes the pause is that of a light point amid shadow, sometimes it is a dark point upon a belt of light; in both these phases the feature is extremely characteristic of the architecture you are writing about, and shows clearly how well the Orissan builders understood the value of a sharp line of cast shadow across a varied surface. Place a rod in front of a long suit of mouldings and see how the cast-shadow of the stick, is winding and turning in and out of round and hollow, projections and depressions, 'brings out' the profile or contour of the different surfaces, and the more direct the sun's rays fall on them, destroying the local surface-shades, the stronger will be the effect of the cast-shadow. The Hindus, I am safe in saying, felt this thoroughly, and never allowed a long suit of moulding to run the risk of appearing tame and uniform from loss of light and shade; these 'stops' as I have called them, are always brought in every here and there giving sharp cast-shadow which develop the forms of the moulded surfaces in a most effective and agreeable way. There seems in fact to have been a perfect thirst for light and shade-crisp, broken light and shade-and these stops are so many 'traps', not 'to catch sun-beams,' but to catch form-explaining shadows. Even in the bases of the piers and pilasters, where the horizontal run of the mouldings barely exceeds a couple of feet, there is still the stop which gives you a vertical 'contouring' midway, and the effect of the moulding thus tied together by narrow strips left in the original surface-plane is, to my mind, charming in the extreme."

1. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra-Antiquities of Orissa-Vol. - I-P. 76

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This play of light and shade has been very well displayed everywhere at Konarka. As it is displayed on the *Bada* and the *Pidha* of the *Mukhashala* and also on the horizontal and vertical carvings of the *Bada*, it is not so well displayed in any other temple of Odisha. Practically, on every inch of Konarka temple the spots of light and shade attract ones attention.



ONE OF THE PIDHA TEMPLE SHAPED PILLARS CARVED ON THE BADA OF A TEMPLE

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SURYA
Now placed in the Garvagruha of
Ramachandi Temple after renovation



ALASHAKANYA
Ramachandi Temple



ALASHAKANYA

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LADY WAITING AT THE DOOR FOR HER MAN TO RETURN
Ramachandi Temple
Perhaps symbolising the wife of a sculptor of the temple of Konarka waiting for her husband to return home

Here the sculptor shows his skill by bringing out an excellent expression on the face of the lady so proper to the theme of this scene. This smile in stone can very well be compared with the famous smile of Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa.

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THE ACHARYA (GURU) ENGAGED IN RELIGIOUS TEACHING
One of the detached sculptures once adorning the Main Temple

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A small part of the Ramachandi temple is now surviving in ruins. However, it is possible to comprehend the type of sculptural work that once existed on the entire temple when it was in undamaged condition. The architecture and the sculptural decoration of this temple were identical to those at the temple of Konarka. Ramachandi temple was also as famous as the temple of Konarka in displaying the play of light and shade and the principle of symmetry and variety adopted in sculptural decoration. The sculpture at the *Natya Mandira* is a little different from that of the others. The *Peetha* and the *Bada* of this temple are different from those of the *Mukhashala* and the main temple. The play of light and shade is not so evident here and the symmetry in arrangements of the sculptural variety maintained in case of the main temple and the *Mukhashala* is also not seen here. Here, to maintain the overall symmetrical appearance of the temple, the sculptor has compromised in the field of variety. Though there are not much elevations and depressions on the *Bada* or the *Peetha* of the *Natya Mandira* even then the position of this temple is very high in all respects amongst the temples of Odisha. The type of construction, high plinth, wide veranda, beautiful motifs of creepers, leaves, animals, human and divine figures have made the temple many times better than any other temple in Odisha.



A ROYAL PROCESSION

The style of construction of all the temples of Odisha is similar in nature. All the major temples consist of a *Rekha* type main temple with a *Pidha* type porch in front of it. Hence, some critics blame the sculptors of Odisha for not showing any variety or differences in temple architecture. If uniformity in design is considered a shortcoming, all the major temples of Odisha have it. Though the temple at Sakshigopal was built only sixty years ago, its appearance is identical to those of the 5th and the 6th Century temples. Even then, it is not right and proper to say that the sculptors of Odisha were quite inexperienced in exhibiting variety in architecture. Rather, there are many examples to prove that they were fully knowledgeable regarding the matter and also they have applied it beautifully to decorate many temples in Odisha. Specially, as it is said before, the way the rule of symmetry and variety has been applied in the temples of Konarka and Bhubaneswar and has been praised as unique in the whole world, who would dare to say that the sculptors of Odisha did not have the sense of variety?

If, not to show the variety in general appearance of the temples is a mistake, then only the sculptures of Odisha are not to be blamed for it. To protect the similarity in the appearance of the temples is one of the expressions of the national tradition exhibited by the sculptors of Odisha. Indians have always endeavoured to find and preserve unity in their thoughts and actions however diverse they are. There is ample evidence of this habit of mind in Indian poetry, theatre, philosophy and epics and in every other field. It is a speciality of the Indians to maintain this kind of unity in diversity. Far from rejecting it as a mistake, Indians have preserved it through ages. In the eyes of the European critics, this quality has no value. It is impossible for them to appreciate this quality as their cultures and traditions are quite different from those of ours. The way they are attracted towards the variety of thoughts, the same way we cherish the unity in our thoughts. We do not consider individuality in our nationality to the extent they do. The Indians forget their individuality while protecting their national and social independence. Individual freedom is only a way to achieve the freedom for the community. As the importance of the means is enhanced by the enhanced importance of the goal it achieves, as per the opinion of the Indians, the value of the individual's life is enhanced by the enhanced feeling of national pride. Hence, what is a quality in Europe is a mistake in India. Since there exist such opposite values in the tradition and the culture of Europe and India, it is not a matter of surprise to see the European writers not being able to accept what the Indians have been following continuously for ages, considering it as a quality. It is the eternal principle of India to maintain the similarity in appearance of the temples of Odisha or India, in spite of the varieties existing in different sections of the temples. This is another example of the India's aversion to change.

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The temple of Konarka is famous for its sculpture and also much more famous for its architecture. This temple, right from the axle pin to the rock like huge stone blocks and from its base to the top has been pierced with the needle of the sculptor creating very fine carvings of wonderful imagery. It is only when one lets himself be carried away by the endless waves of imagination that he would appreciate the beauty and finesse of the carvings. Here, all the assumptions made by man fail and the only assistance he receives is from the feelings that he gets while looking at these wonderful works of art. Every visit reveals a new and different aspect of Konarka and the visitor gets so immersed in its beauty that he does not rest until he examines it in detail. In fact what Professor Heber had once said, "The Indians built like Titans and finished like jewellers," is true, word by word, in case of the sculptors of Konarka. Bishan Swarup has rightly said that, had the temple of Konarka been constructed out of gold and silver, even then it would not have been considered as a coarse work and devoid of any details. The temple is so huge and filled entirely from its top to bottom with so finely carved sculptural work that, if it takes one year for the 1200 sculptors just to construct the bare temple, then it would not take less than sixteen years to complete it with all these sculptural decoration. When all these facts are considered together it becomes difficult even to comprehend its image. As said earlier, the visitors get so surprised and stunned by Konarka that they miss its beauty. Even though Konarka has lost its earlier pride after the huge temple was converted to a miserable heap of stone, the visitor, looking at its ruins, is so immersed in a wondrous feeling that he does not get a chance to feel sad about its unfortunate demise. Even today, in this ruined state, Konarka creates wonders in the hearts of the visitors and stands there as an example of the epitome of Indian sculptural architecture.

Konarka is famous for its sculpture of different motifs of creepers, flowers, honeycomb, animals and human figures, divine images and *Nagas* (cobras) carved on its body. Almost the entire body of the temple is decorated with very fine and beautiful carvings of creeper and honeycomb motifs. Out of all the flowers, the lotus is profusely used in decoration of the temple. The lotus in its every state, from the bud to the full bloom state, has helped to enhance the beauty of the temple. At places the divine figures are seen standing on a full- bloomed lotus pedestals or seen fondly holding in their hands buds of lotus by its stem. At some other places, the god is seen sitting on a throne of lotus with stretched legs and holding a full bloom lotus by its stem. The entire temple, from its *Pada* (bottom) to the *Kumbha* at the top and from the bottom of the door frames to the *Garvamudra* (the ribbed circular stone block placed at the top of the temple walls) at its top is decorated with carvings of lotus flowers. Specially, a beautiful and huge lotus image like the *Garvamudra* of *Natya Mandira*, now lying by the side of this temple, is not seen anywhere in Odisha. In fact, as said earlier, the Indian Aryans were using the lotus flower in connection with the gods and the goddesses, regarding it as more sacred than what the water lily was considered by the Christians, the lotus by the Egyptians and the rose by the Greeks. The lotus has been compared with the face, the eyes, the feet and the seat of the gods and goddesses and also with the heart of the men and women. In fact, what is beautiful, clean and sacred are always compared with the lotus. The position that lotus has acquired in the hearts of the Hindus, no other flower has been able to achieve that yet. Again, the relationship of the temple of the Sun God at Konarka with the Sun and the Lotus is not only famous for its literal or poetic value; it has also been proved scientifically. Like in the epics of Egypt,* this relationship has been also described extensively as eternal and inseparable in the *puranas* or the epics and scriptures of India. Apart from it, as said earlier, Konarka is a *Padma Kshetra* (Sacred Zone of Lotus), the temple of Konarka is built on *Padma Ganda* (the Lotus Gorge) and a lotus shaped stone block is placed at the top of all the temples of Konarka. Again, the river flowing by its side was named as Chitrotpala. The city established on the banks of this river was the capital city of Odisha and was known as Chitrotpala. The Lotus is the symbol of extreme beauty and sacredness and the temple of Konarka is a superb specimen of beauty. Hence, profuse use of the lotus in Konarka is justified and quite normal. It would not be wrong if Konarka is named as *Padmalaya* or the abode of the lotus.

The sculptural motifs of animals at Konarka are much more enchanting than the motifs of creepers and flowers. Out of these carved animals, some are from the real world and the others are imaginary. The lions adorning the temple of Konarka are imaginary like those on the other temples of Odisha. The difference here is that these lions are without horns. Again, the huge size, the terrifying appearance and the lifelike carvings of the Gaja-Singha and the lions of the eastern gate make them look comparatively more natural. In spite of these lions, it is to be

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***FOOT NOTE**: The epics and literature describe that the lotus is extensively used in the sculpture of Egypt. Like in India, as there is a relation with "Ra" or the Sun on daily basis, the lotus is used in the worship of the Sun. In Egypt the lotus was also being used extensively during performance of the last rites of a dead person as they believed that, the person while rising from the grave would rise being decorated with lotus flowers. Later, from its use in performing the divine rights, the use of lotus in its painted form spread to decorate the attires of the people. The bud of the lotus was also being used as a staple diet. The bread made out of the lotus buds was a favourite food of both, the rulers and the ruled. It was also served to some gods and goddesses as a special offering.

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agreed that the sculptors of Konarka have followed the rules of nature more than the sculptors of the other temples of Odisha and by their superb craftsmanship, carved figures of animals appear as though they are in their home environment, nature.

Critics have been overwhelmingly charmed by the sculptural images of the animals of the real world. Out of all the animals, the elephant is seen at more places. Right from the lower platform to the throne of the Sun God, the elephant is carved everywhere. Specially, the two huge size elephants (Chapter-VIII) found at the north of the *Mukhashala* are lifelike and natural in appearance and are also widely praised by the critics. The two stallions of the south side of the *Mukhashala* are much more wonderful and lifelike than the elephants of the north side. Here, the theme of nature has not been followed. Rather, at the first glance, they appear as two real stallions galloping in the war field and create fear in the mind of the onlooker. The first time I saw these two huge and rampant stallions in a cool and quiet moonlit night, I was scared to go near them. The famous critic of sculpture, Professor E. B. Havell has the following to say about these two stallions: -

"Had it by chance been labelled as 'Roman' or 'Greek, this magnificent work 'of art would now be the pride of some great metropolitan museum in Europe and America. Here the Indian sculptors have shown that they can express with as much fire and passion as the greatest European art, the pride of victory and the glory of triumphant warfare; for not even the Homeric grandeur of the Elgin marbles surpasses the magnificent movement and modelling of this Indian Achilles, and the superbly monumental horse in its massive strength and vigour is not unworthy of comparison with Verrochio's famous masterpiece at Venice."[1] Not only Professor Havell, Dr. Hunter and other European and Indian critics have also more or less praised the two horses in the same manner.[2] In fact, the critics are as fond of these two lifelike and huge stallions as non-professional visitors are.

The images of gods and goddesses, the demons and the human beings of the temple of Konarka are the ultimate specimens of the sculptural art of Odisha. The body of the images look so smooth and lifelike, that even though these were carved so many years ago, they look as if the sculptor has just finished the job and left for a break. Even after being exposed for ages to the sun and the rains, they look so fresh and lifelike. Sterling, in praise of the sculpture, writes, "The skill and labour of the best artists, seem to have been reserved for the finely polished slabs of chlorite, which line and decorate the outer faces of the doorways, The whole of the sculpture on these figures, comprising men and animals, foliage, and arabesque patterns, is executed with a degree of taste, propriety, and freedom, which would stand comparison with some of our best specimens of Gothic architectural ornaments. The workmanship remains, too, as perfect as if it had just come from under the chisel of the sculptor, owing to the extreme hardness and durability of the stone."[3] The ultimate skill of the sculptors of Konarka has been expressed in these images of black granite stone. The expressions created on the faces of the human figures, devotees, singers, hunters, warriors, teachers, disciples and lovers, etc. carved in various poses and postures are so exquisite. At places the ornaments are so finely and precisely carved on the human and the divine images that they are very well comparable to the real ornaments of gold. The sculptures are at once evidence of the sculptors' skill and of their inspiration, experience and deep emotion. Manomohan Ganguli has determined the proportions of all the limbs of the figures and confirms them to have been strictly made as per *Shukraniti*. However, it is not necessary to explain all these here again.[4]

The human images of Konarka do not show any muscle. The Greek and Roman statues look more natural because of the display of the muscles on their bodies. Not only in Konarka, but also almost everywhere in India the images do not have any muscles carved on to them. The European critics consider it as a great weakness of Indian sculpture and do not consider the images as replica of their natural counterparts. To defend the Indian sculptors regarding this matter, Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra and Bishan Swarup discuss the anatomy of the Indian bodies. The body of the Indians are not loaded with bulging muscles. The bodies of the kings, emperors, landlords and the priests are not as loaded with muscles as with flesh and fat. Hence, the human images do not only in the case of muscles, the same defect is also felt in case of the carved breasts of the female figures. The breasts are carved raised

1. Professor E. B. Havell – Indian Sculpture and Painting

2. Dr. William Wilson Hunter – Orissa – Vol. I – P. 294

3. Andrew Sterling – Asiatic Research – Vol. – VV – P. 332

4. Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P. 222 – 223

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COURTESY: NATIONAL MUSEUM – NEW DELHI

ISHANA (THE GOD OF NORTH-EAST)
THE IMAGE OF SHIVA PLACED IN THE NORTH-EAST DIRECTION AS THE PROTECTOR OF THE TEMPLE
One of the detached sculptures once decorating the main temple

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and pointing straight rather than slightly drooping downward*. The reason here is not a mistake committed in carving the sculpture or the lack of skill or experience of the sculptor. The way the navel and the knees of the image of the Sun God are carved at Konarka, it cannot be said that there was any mistake committed by the sculptor by not showing the muscles. The reason for it should rather be investigated in the psychology and the thought process of the Odias in particular and the Indians in general.

The Indian thinking is more inclined towards spiritualism than towards worldly life. The ancient Indian Aryans were indifferent to the physical body. The physical body of a person is temporary and to seek satisfaction of the body only is luxury in another name. Hence, the Aryan saints used to say -

Written in Sanskrit - (Transliterated version) -

Trushnalaye Puni Simatita Sukharajye Biharanti Mude - (Appendix-II-Sl. No. 26)

The ultimate goal in the life of every Indian is to apprehend the supreme reality beyond everyday life.

It would not be wrong to say that, those who were so very skilled in sculptural work could have carved the exact replicas of the living human bodies had they wished to do so. The ultimate examples of the truth of this statement are found in the lifelike image of the buffalo in the premises of the temple of Lingaraja in Bhubaneswar and the horses and the elephants in Konarka. In fact the Odias, like other Indians did not want to keep the sculpture confined to present time. The sculpture of Greece and Rome is based on imitation of what the senses apprehend, whereas the sculptural art of India and of Odisha is eternal, idealistic and based on spiritualism. They do not decorate their sculpture the way we do. When looked at from the materialistic and contemporary angle, the Odia or the Indian sculpture seems incomplete and unreal. However, looking from a different and more important angle the Greek and the Roman



COURTESY: NATIONAL MUSEUM – NEW DELHI

VARUNANI

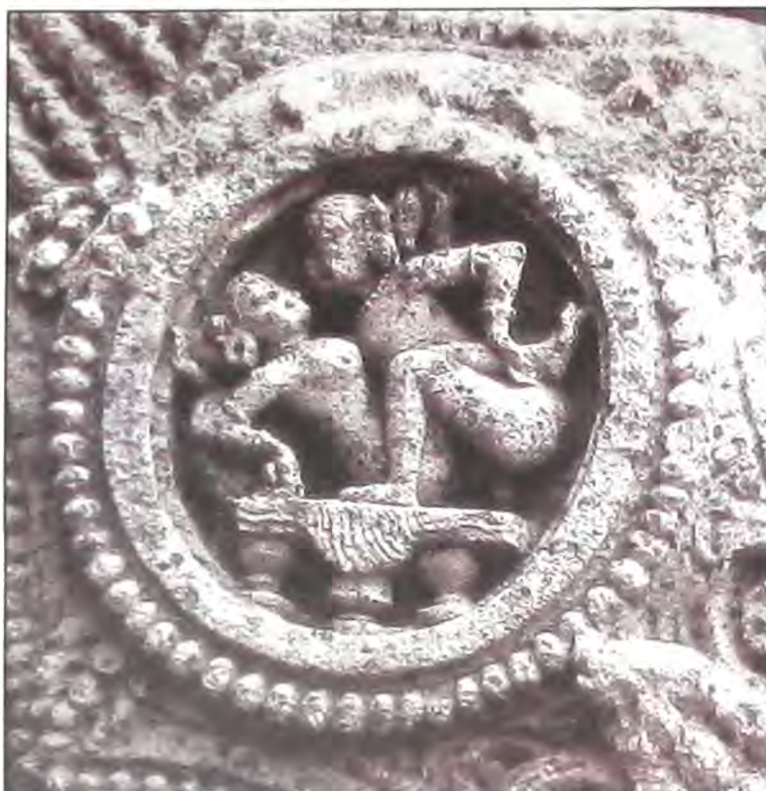
The consort of Varuna

Varuna is the God of the oceans and other water bodies. He rides a crocodile.

* There are also some rare exceptions like the pictures of the sculptures displayed on Page 6 and 66. Probably this exception was being practised for the mundane images and not for the celestial ones.

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sculpture lacks real significance. Art should not be kept confined only within the present and should have open avenues for the future. Art is not a matter belonging to one country or to one time period. It spreads all over the universe and is one of the steps that leads to experiencing the eternal expressions made by the God. Hence, as the present depends on its immediate past, the same way it should also keep the road open for its future state. As Hegel has rightly said, "God is at the centre of different expressions in art." Confining art to the material state of the present makes it static, uninteresting and goalless.



EROTIC IMAGES AT THE CENTRE OF A BROAD SPOKE

Hence, the Indians did not keep art confined to the visible portion of the material world. Rather, they used it to express the real, eternal and the living truth inherent in this universe. Even when the sculptor tried to configure and express the appearance, type and expressions of the human beings in his art, this tradition made him to unconsciously imagine Brahma, Vishnu, Sun, Indra, Kali, Durga and other gods and goddesses as human beings. As a result, the feelings, expressions, activities and social and ethical thinking have been expressed in the various images of the gods and the goddesses. Imagining the gods and the goddesses as human beings has not affected their divinity; rather the importance of the humanity has been enhanced by progressing towards the state of eternal happiness of the gods and the goddesses.

Manomohan Ganguli has rightly said that the sculptors, while carving the human figures have taken the spiritual and divine persons like the saints as their models rather than kings and warriors. He gives the example of Ramakrishna Paramahansa's body. Those who are indifferent to the materialistic world they cannot take the royal heroes as models for their art. The lifestyle of the divine and the religious saints is the eternal role model of India and hence it is quite natural for the sculptors to imagine Shankara, Chaitanya and Ramakrishna while creating human figures. Looking from this angle, the absence of muscles in human figures does not seem to be an unusual or a surprising mistake of the sculptor.



CARVED AT THE CENTRE OF A BROAD SPOKE

Again, muscles are not a natural sign on the human bodies. A child does not have muscles. It is seen only on the human bodies when it is artificially developed with effort. Hence, only because of the absence of the muscles, the human and the divine images at Konarka cannot be rejected as unnatural in appearance. Rather, they will remain as the favourite of the visitors of Konarka for ages to come, being regarded as the best creations of the sculptors and the ultimate examples of sculptural art.

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Among the human figures in the upper *Barandi* of the *Mukhashala*, the images of the male-female couples are very beautiful to look at. The modern writers criticise these images as obscene. Bishan Swarup says that, setting aside the obscenity in them, these images are a matter of pride for the sculptors for their beautiful appearance and construction of the body. Had these images been made of black granite in place of sandstone, then the irresistible beauty of these images would have overshadowed the obscenity projected by them and the visitor would not have noticed it (Pages 216 to 225)

Not only at Konarka, but also at almost all the temples of Odisha these obscene images are found on the body of the *Mukhashala* only and never on the wall of the main temple. Still then, the presence of such obscenity in the temples of the gods has baffled the critics. They consider that, having such obscene images on a temple regarded as abode of the god is demeaning the very purpose of the temples and is a major problem. Especially, its presence on a temple like Konarka which boasts of gorgeous sculptural work and expression of elevated feelings and taste degrades the stature of the temple. The critics have found many answers to this problem in terms of various opinions expressed in its favour or opposing it. Some say that it helps the visitors to keep their senses under control before they present themselves before the god. Some others say that, the obscenity is present on the temples to test the visitors regarding the extent of control they have over their senses. Of course, these are all assumptions and it is difficult to know if the builder of the temple had thought of it in the same way at the time of its construction.



EROTIC IMAGE AT THE UPPER BARANDI OF THE COMMON PLINTH

On the *Barandi* of the *Peetha* or the plinth of the temple obscene images of couples standing under the tree are also found. Some say that, this is the tree under which Buddha was enlightened and, in the image of the couple under it they identify the male as Buddha himself and the female as salvation personified. This assumption is as impossible as is laughable. It just cannot be imagined that Buddha attained salvation in such an environment.

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Again, there is no such proof in the epics and scriptures of Buddhism regarding salvation to have presented itself to Buddha as a female. To unnecessarily connect Buddha with all the scenes carved on Konarka is just madness.



EROTIC IMAGE ON THE UPPER BARANDI OF MUKHASHALA

Ferguson says, "xxxxxx for the sculpture that covers the walls - not the roof - is generally bad in design and execution and of an obscenity in expression which it is impossible to describe, and which it would be difficult for even a very depraved European imagination to conceive." To find a reason for the presence of such images on the temples he says that, it happened due to the influence of Vaishnavism as such thinking is not possible in case of Shaivism. Therefore, these obscene images are seen only on the temples of Vishnu.[1] With this statement, he proves the temple of Konarka as a temple of Vishnu. However, this opinion of Fergusson only shows his lack of experience in Hindu sculptural art. The obscene images are found not only on the temples of Vishnu, these are also seen on the temple of Lingaraja in Bhubaneswar which is a temple of Shiva and also found on the temple of Mahadeva (Shiva) in Bundelkhand. However, there are no traces of obscene images on the Vaishnav temple of Ananta Vasudeva in Bhubaneswar. Therefore, there might have some connection of it with Shaivism rather than with Vaishnavism. It would rather be proper to find a reason for the presence of these obscene images, looking in to the practice of worshipping Lingam by Shaivas and the worship of Kali in *Tantricism*.

Some, looking at these obscene images assume that the taste of the society at that time was very uncivilised and immoral. Sterling, citing the examples of these obscene images on the temples, has described the moral characters of the Odias of this time with very harsh words. He has also cited the worship of Durga and Lingam as the examples of the extreme moral degradation of the Odias.[2] Now it is neither the place to contradict these statements nor proper for any reasonable person to do so. However, this much can be said here that it is easy to unnecessarily cite such wrong statements. It is not that as the Commissioner of Odisha Sterling made such statement against the Odias; his peon at times also might be making such harsh statements against the entire English community out of his resentment against his master. Many not so learned and heartless foreigners

1. Dr. J. Fergusson – Picturesque Illustration of Ancient Architecture in Hindustana – P. 28
2. Andrew Sterling – Orissa – P. 48 and Foot Note – Baptist Edition

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sometimes make such harsh statements against other communities. It is not proper to prove the bad taste of the community through the presence of these obscene images. The taste which shows such high level of sculptural skill and beauty, the same taste could not have been so low. Not only in Odisha, worship of the Lingam and Durga is observed in the entire Country and the obscene images are also found in the temple of Bundelkhand and in other temples of gods and goddesses in India. For this reason no reader of history of any age would ever be prepared to make the entire Indian community as guilty of having bad taste. To find an answer, it would rather be better to investigate elsewhere than to unnecessarily blame the taste of the community.

What we judge as obscene by our contemporary taste and feelings were not being so perceived by the people in the past. Not only in India, almost everywhere in the world, people then did not have the present perception of obscenity. Rather, the procreation organ, the public exhibition of which is considered obscene today, was being worshipped in the past with lots of devotion, and also many rituals were initiated in its honour. The Norwegians, before the advent of Christianity, used to worship the procreation organ of the horses preserved in glass enclosures with great devotion. Similarly, in our country the worship of Lingam and the naked image of Kali are still in vogue. As Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra says, this tradition more or less existed in countries like ancient Egypt, Assyria, and Babylonia and with the ancient Aryans of Europe.[1] The Frezinian youths of the Asia Minor countries were observing a ritual for their prime goddess Amma. As per the ritual, the young males used to cut their procreation organ with a sharp shell and offered those with devotion to their goddess Amma pronouncing "Amma, please accept it". Such tradition[2] also existed among the priests of Phoenicia and Mexico. The god Osiris and his wife goddess Isis (similar to our Hara and Pārbati) of Egypt are the roots of all moral principles devised in their society. The representative image of Osiris and Isis that is taken out with pomp and ceremony during the festival time is only a replica of the phallus of a bull. There are also many examples stated in the Bible regarding the women of Jewish community were earning their livelihood by fabricating and selling phalli (Lingams) of gold and silver. Abraham, while taking a vow from his employee, had asked him to do so with his hand placed between his two thighs.[3] At the time of his death, Jacob also made Joseph to do so.



EROTIC IMAGES ON THE UPPER BARANDI OF MUKHASHALA

Such practices are still in vogue in the Arabian community. "While taking a vow, the Arabians place their hands on their revered organs."[4] Our custom of taking a vow with the hand placed on Shiva Lingam might be a remnant of some ancient practice. Many such examples are found in various communities living on this earth. All these facts point to one statement, that is, the procreation organ is very sacred in nature, and the vows taken on touching it are never to be broken. Like this, the procreation organ was not considered unholy or an element of shame

1. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra – Antiquities of Orissa – Vol. - I – P. 145
2. Herbert Spencer – The Principles of Sociology – Vol. II – Pt. IV – Chapter III – P. 66
3. Book of Genesis
4. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra - Antiquities of Orissa - Vol. I – P. 66

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in the past and, on the contrary, it was rather considered sacred and respectable. In fact, the procreation organ of the human being is the individual means for procreation in this universe and in the past there was no such feeling of shame or repulsion associated with it.

Hence, the statements like, "an obscenity in expression which it is impossible to describe" and "which it would be difficult for even a very depraved European imagination to conceive", are completely baseless and unnecessarily expressed. The proofs regarding the sanctity of the so-called obscene objects have been extracted from the European religious scripture, the Bible. Apart from this, the statues made by the famous sculptor of Greece, Phidias, were not in any way better in this respect than the images found in Konarka temple. For example, the sculpture carved by Phidias shows, "Nude females resting in a pronate position on supine youths on the throne of his glorious Olympian Jupiter - a work of art, which according to the Stoic Epictetus, 'It was still considered a misfortune for any of his contemporaries to die without having seen it.' What the figures represented is not positively known. xxxxxxx but whatever they might have been, they were certainly not in a very decent pose."[1]

The Stoic philosophers usually do not appreciate such obscenity. Even then, the Stoic philosopher, Epictetus, in spite the obscenity in it, was so much enchanted by this image of the couples that he was visiting it time and again. The famous Greek philosopher Plato, after being dissatisfied with the contemporary state, society and administrative procedures, presented his ideology about the ideal society and administrative principles in which he did not differentiate between decency and obscenity in relationship among the males and females. He has expressed in his famous book REPUBLIC[2] that, the male and the female should copulate in any public place, in front of everybody, even in presence of the government employees. These are all events of the ancient age. Even in the present times there was no limit to the obscene statues made by the European sculptors. The obscenity in these art objects and the paintings was so vivid in Europe that their Government enacting a special rule banned the sale of these articles. As per Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra, "xxxx before the passing of the Act for the suppression of the obscene pictures, print-shops in Calcutta abounded in European pictures of the most disgusting descriptions possible, which could not be surpassed by the pruriency of the sculptures under notice.

1. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra - Antiquities of Orissa - Vol. I – P. 66 F.N
2. Plato – Republic – Chapter V

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The presence of the erotic images on the temples have been brutally criticised by the western critics. Some others have cited the reason for their presence on the temple walls is to ward off the evil spirits and to protect the temple from natural disasters like lightening, storms, etc. However, Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra has taken a spiritual angle to justify the presence of the erotic images at particular places on the temple complex.

It could also be true that in those days a large population was a necessity at the time of both war and peace. Agriculture was very labour intensive and during the war human casualties were very high. Hence the rulers always wanted a moderate size population and, because of the large number of visitors coming to the temples and monuments, they did not find a better place to advertise for sending their message across.

Until lately, European stereoscopic pictures taken from life, and indescribably obscene, were equally abundant in Calcutta." [1] In fact, in the field of obscenity India cannot compete with Europe. Hence, considering the gradual development of human society and its perception, the existence of these obscene images in the temples of Odisha cannot be termed as the product of immoral taste of the Odias. The communities of Odisha or India, in any age of the history, have not been found guilty of immorality. Dr. Bloch has rightly said regarding these images of Konarka that, "Nothing indeed could be more unjust than to decry the people who made them (the obscene figures in Konarka) as indulging in immorality, gross as the figures may seem to the modern ideas."[2]

It has been stated earlier that the art of Odisha is primarily based on spiritualism. Looking from the angle of spiritualism these images do not present any obscenity. Due to the presence of these obscene images the devoted religious tourists to the place do not perceive anything like the wrong feeling that comes today to the mind of certain critics. The temples of the gods are all beautiful and sacred. It is true that thousands and thousands of men and women and young males and females are observing these images of the obscene couples, but during the worship in the temple or even at the time of return nobody carries back permanently this feeling of obscenity with him. As their strong faith in god creates enough strength of mind to mitigate the sufferings of journey, the same way, in place of the so-called obscenity it enhances the sacred feeling of spiritualism. As all the day-to-day social and familial activities of the Hindus are inspired by religion, the sculpture is also inspired the same way. These images of Konarka are in fact expressions of these religious activities in a different form.

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1. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra – Antiquities of Orissa – Vol. II – P. 155 F.N
2. Dr. Bloch – Bengal District Gazetteer – Puri – P. 283

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Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra has rightly said that, "Looking to these facts I am induced to believe that the offensive figures are due to a desire to typify a religious idea, and not to an inherent vicious taste in the artists or their employers. It was not 'to incite, excite, or gratify the lower feelings of the public,' 'to lower art to unworthy purposes by objectionable representations,' but to symbolize a religious idea, that the offensive sculptures were carved; and this was done without any perception of their offensive character." [1] Today, the devotees are daily worshipping the Lingam. However, none feels a trace of the presently associated obscenity with the Lingam in place of the sacred divine feelings.

In the architecture of Konarka, the sculptors have shown the scenes drawn from the real life of the human beings in a variety of ways. On the temple of Konarka many scenes like the king's court, merrymaking, vivid war preparations, critical study of the epics by the gurus, disciples attending on their guru, one's quest for knowledge and deep study, penance observed by the saints, meditation, devotion, sad feelings expressed by the devotees, the unnatural facial expression of the singer while singing melodious songs, wonderful acts of the heroes, anxiety expressed by a dying person, effort of the lovers to unite and the many other familial activities of the human society are carved beautifully everywhere.

1. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra - Antiquities of Orissa - Vol. I – P.P. 66-67

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The sculptors of Konarka have tried to create on the body of the temple the images of all the states the human being passes through, and whatever he does in different fields during the entire period, beginning from his birth to death. This so-called obscenity is also one of these activities he engages himself in his lifetime. The sculptor utilises all his resources to depict naturally and effectively the singing of the singer, heroism of the hero, rule of the kings, love of the devotees, devotion of the saints, and in the same way, he also tries to show the union of the lover with his beloved or the copulation of the male with the female. Otherwise, being a professional, he would have felt guilty of not being faithful to his art. For creation of a better sculpture, the artist has to be emotionally involved with his creation. The sculptor while creating his object of art, inspired by the spiritual thoughts, places himself far ahead of contemporary time. Hence, even if any important activity of the human life appears to the general public as obscene, the sculptor, inspired by the spiritual feelings and emotionally involved in creating the images, feels it as sacred and as satisfying as any other normal work. This feeling is the ultimate state for the sculptor of his involvement with his art. Neglecting this feeling, an artist can never be true to his profession. Hence, the sculptors of Konarka, being inspired by the spiritual feelings, created these obscene images for achieving the completeness of their profession and they also created innumerable images depicting the various activities of the human beings to show the range of their imagination and experience.

Looking at these images, the devotees get so immersed in the spiritual thoughts that they do not feel even a slice of obscenity in their minds. Hence, it can be said that, the emotions and the feelings of spiritualism are being fully realised from these images till date.

Following the belief of some of the modern sculptors Manomohan Ganguli writes that, "The Uriya artists say that the introduction of such obscene figures is not only to ward off the evil spirits but to protect the structure against lightening, cyclones or other visitations of nature. This seems to be the rational explanation of the anomaly perplexing the intellect of not only the students of architecture but of an ordinate pilgrim."[1] Of course, it cannot be said to what extent it is based on scientific reasoning and also to what extent on superstition. Whatever it may be, some of the critics of today do not believe in the culture and the faith of the people of the earlier generations and the sanctity of the purpose of sculptors. These critics propose to remove these images from the temples citing the immoral effect they cast on the life of the people and thereby deteriorating the taste of the public by the obscenity they project. If really the society is being polluted by these images then the matter is to be considered seriously. However, had the Odia sculptors apprehended such effect, they would never have ever placed these obscene images on the permanent and holy temples of the gods and the goddesses. It is only a baseless imagination to consider that sin enters the society through these images. The sculptor had never ever thought of such things and there is also no room for thinking in such manner. The Hindu males and females are observing these images since ages and had more sins been actually committed due to these images then the Hindu society would not have existed in this world today as a society at all. In connection with the temples, no other feelings except the feeling of spiritualism has ever been felt or could be felt in the hearts of the Hindus. Again, are countries not having such images gentle and completely free of sins? The religious philosophers like the Stoics are very rarely seen in Europe. They were also visiting repeatedly and enjoying the beauty of the previously described obscene statue erected on the throne of Jupiter. The obscenity projected by it could not overpower the beauty of this statue. The beauty of the images carved on Konarka temple is beyond comparison, and because of their enchanting beauty the obscenity in them is not perceived. Again, it is impossible for this so-called obscenity to enter the hearts of the devotees for whom the temple was built. Above all these considerations is that the historical value of these images is immense. With these images we realise how with a strong and deep-rooted religious belief the Odias of the middle age perceived the holiness among all this so called obscenity.

Apart from enhancing the beauty of the temple, these are also products of the sculptors' religious thinking. Like being among the Gopis, Srikrishna made his love sacred and divine with his spiritual ways, the Odia sculptors were feeling the manifestation of divinity in their activities considered immoral and hateful in the present time. There was no trace of sin or greed in it; these were perceived by them as only the processes and rules of the nature bound within a sacred religion backed by a strong belief. Hence, to propose the destruction of the images, which are the best examples of sculpture, which do not pose any threat to the society and the historical value of which is immense, shows the moral weakness and baseless imagination of such critics.

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1. Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P. 229

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According to Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra there were no erotic images displayed on the main temple of Konarka. No such images were also present in Natya Mandira. Since the main temple and a part of the Natya Mandira do not exist now the concentration of the erotic images on the Mukhashala make them more vividly visible which must have been diluted by the beautiful and extensive non-erotic decoration present on the walls of the gigantic main temple and the Natya Mandira. Since the main temple does not exist now more attention of the critics are being drawn towards the erotic images due to a drastic change in the intended proportion of the erotic to the non-erotic images after the main temple collapsed.

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WORSHIP OF SHIVA, JAGANNATHA AND MAHISHAMARDINI DURGA ON A SINGLE PLATFORM
It indicates the cordial relationship amongst all the three sects of Hindu religion prevailing at the time.

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APSARA
(A dancing celestial female beauty)



A SADHU (A SAINT)



CHAKULIA PANDA
A person singing and sometimes bowing a stringed instrument roams *door to door collecting alms.*

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DEULA CHARINI
(Protector of the temple)



NAGAKANYA
(Hybrid celestial image)



ANTA BHANGA KHAMBA









OTHER DIFFERENT TYPES OF DECORATIVE KHAMBAS (PILLARS)

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CHAPTER XIII

CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING

A number of mysterious legends about the construction of the present temple at Konarka are still doing rounds among the people. Out of all, especially the two legends stated below are important. The first one is recorded in *Madala Panji* and the second one is only heard from the people's mouth.

The First Legend: -

King Langula Narasingha Deba ordered his minister Sadashiba Samantaray Mahapatra popularly known as Shibei Santara to construct a temple at Konarka for the Sun God. Shibei Santara began the work with filling the gorge of a river with stone blocks. To lay the foundation of the temple he dropped stone blocks in to the river starting from the centre of the gorge. However, the huge stone blocks, soon after being dropped, were swallowed and washed away by the river. Being unsuccessful in laying the foundation and losing his heart over the matter, Shibei Santara prayed to goddess Ramachandi seeking her help and blessings. In the meantime, one day, while he was on his way to inform his King, Narasingha Deba about his problem, a severe rainstorm made him take shelter for the night in a village hut. An old woman was living alone in that house. Not knowing who his guest was, she served him with some hot porridge in a plate for dinner. Shibei Santara started to eat the porridge with his fingers right from the centre of the plate. His fingers could not bear the hot porridge and he almost burned his finger. The old woman laughed at him and commented, "Hey, you are doing just as Shibei Santara is building the temple, starting to eat hot porridge from the centre." Shibei Santara being surprised by the woman's comment wanted to know what she really meant by that. The old woman replied with a smile, "He is dropping the stones at the middle of the gorge and the river is swallowing them. He should rather drop them starting from the sides. The same way you are also eating hot porridge from the centre of the plate. Your fingers are unable to bear it. This way the porridge will also be spoiled soon. Start eating from a side of the plate, your fingers will not be hurt and the porridge will not be spoiled." Shibei Santara was surprised at the old woman's comment and could realise that goddess Ramachandi appeared before him as the old woman to solve his problem. He returned to the construction site, acted as advised by Ramachandi, and successfully laid the foundation of the temple starting from the banks of the river gorge.

The Second Legend: -

It is learned from this legend that 1200 sculptors worked for 16 years to construct the temple of Konarka. One of the sculptor's wife was pregnant when he left his home for the construction site of the temple. He had a rare variety of berry tree in the courtyard of his house. Since there was nobody else in his family to send for him in case of emergency and there was no way he could come home before completion of the temple, he advised his wife, in case of emergency, to send his son when he is born and grown up. He also instructed her to send with him some berry plucked from the tree in his courtyard for his son's identification. The sculptor got busy in construction of the temple along with the others and in the meantime, his wife delivered a handsome boy. One day, the friends of his son, now grown up, teased him and called him a bastard. The son, being disturbed by the comments of his friends, asked his mother about his father's identity. His mother explained to him about his father's engagement in construction of the temple at Konarka and advised him to go there to meet him. As was instructed by her husband, she sent some berries with her son for his identification. The son finally reached Konarka and met his father. His sculptor father recognised him through the berries his son was carrying. At the time, though the sculptors have been constructing the temple since many years, due to some problems they were unable to finish it. In the evening everybody retired for the day. Here, the son of the sculptor working alone for the entire night completed the construction of the temple up to the *Kalasha* (head). In the following morning, all the sculptors were surprised to see the temple completed single-handed by the son of the sculptor. They became envious and also angry, apprehending loss of job and even capital punishment from the King for their inefficiency in comparison to the ability of the boy. To save themselves from the disaster, they asked the father of the boy, if he cared for the lives of the 1200 sculptors or only for the life of his son. The father was in a great dilemma and finally being unable to disregard his fellow sculptors wishes, climbed to the top of the temple

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where his son was busy working and pushed him down. His son fell down and died. The temple could not be completed; the place was desecrated and then abandoned. Even today, when in a dilemma, people ask "Do you care for the twelve hundred sculptors or for your son only?"

Of course, there are many unreal events described in both the above-described legends. The facts like 'Shibei Santara losing his head over the matter concerning the filling of the gorge with stone blocks stated in the first legend, and in the second legend, 'the young son of the sculptor finishing the construction of the temple single handed in one night and the temple declared unholy and abandoned' are only imaginary and baseless statements made by these legends. Even then, there is some truth hidden within all the imaginary descriptions.
The facts which are derived from the first legends as true are:

(i) King Langula Narasingha Deba constructed the present temple of Konarka through Shibei Santara

(ii) Shibei Santara laid the foundation of the temple after filling up the gorge of Padmatola and

(iii) Shibei Santara started the construction of the temple with a prayer to goddess Ramachandi, the prime goddess of the place.

These facts have also been described at many places in this Book.

The major fact derived from the second legend is that,

(i) 1200 hundred sculptors were engaged continuously for 16 years in construction of the temple at Konarka spending the entire time away from their respective homes and families.

The writer of the Puri Gazetteer also thinks it to be quite probable.

Apart from all the truths confirmed by the evidences, the most important truth contained in these two legends is the perception of the common man regarding construction of the temple of Konarka. The huge size of the temple, its gorgeous sculptural decoration and the use of huge stone blocks of the size approaching to that of the hillocks in its construction makes one to believe that some supernatural power was involved in the whole act. Konarka temple is famous for its extraordinary sculpture and architecture, and the engineering involved in its construction is even more extraordinary. The visitors would not have been so stunned by looking at the temple had it been made of small pieces of stone blocks and not of the huge blocks of stone actually used for its construction. Many experienced engineers from our country and abroad have seen the temple of Konarka only to be baffled by the engineering skill applied to its construction. Now, irrespective of the development of science having such a great influence on our society and there having been so many discoveries in the field of engineering, it was impossible to transport a single block of stone (the *Nabagraha* Panel) used in the temple of Konarka even after using all the engineering and technological means available at the time. In that age, how did the Odias transport such huge blocks of stone from a distance of hundreds of miles and lifted them to such a great height to work at the top of the temple is a question the answer of which is beyond the imagination of even the famous engineers of Europe. In this situation, how would one expect it to be comprehended by the non-professional visitors to the place? Hence, they think that the construction of a temple like Konarka would have simply been impossible without the help of a divine power. They presume that, millions of Shibei Santara would not have been able to construct the temple of Konarka; it had been possible only by the mystical power of the prime goddess Ramachandi. One day, God suddenly wished the temple to be complete and hence, the temple was completed only in one night by the young son of a sculptor. The continuous effort of 1200 sculptors for 16 years is nothing in comparison to the huge amount of work and skilled man-hours required for making a temple like Konarka a reality.

Konarka is a place located on the sea beach with sand dunes present all over. There are no rocks available within a radius of at least 25 miles from the place. Hence, for the required stone blocks for the temple, they must have gone up to at least Khurda. Thinking about the size of the stone blocks used in construction and the distance over which they were transported one is at his wit's end. The dimension of the *Gaja-Singha* (Elephant-Lion) that was placed on the wall of the main temple of Konarka is stated earlier in Chapter-VIII. The portion of it projecting outside the wall of the main temple was 600 cubic feet in volume. As one cubic foot of this kind of stone weighs 171 pounds, the weight of this outer portion only was 45 Tons or 1260 *Maunds*. Moreover, this piece of stone along with its inner portion was placed on the temple wall at a height of 170 feet.

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The description of the *Nabagraha* panel (Page 113), its size and other details are stated earlier in Chapter-VI. The total weight of the panel was 26.5 Ton or 742 *Maunds* and it was made out of a single block of black granite stone. The sand stone blocks for the temple might have been procured from Khurda, but granite is not available there. Therefore, it must have been procured from Nilagiri and other interior princely states which are famous for the availability of black granite stone. Even in the present age, some 80 years ago, for construction of the throne of the deity of Satyabadi temple, Baba Harinarayana Brahmachari had to procure black granite stone from Nilagiri. After building the throne and covering the floor of the main temple of Satyabadi with granite brought from Nilagiri, the surplus pieces were used for covering the floor from the Garuda pillar to the *Mukhashala* in the temple of Jagannatha. Hence, as said earlier the *Nabagraha* panel was built out of black granite procured from Nilagiri. The government had once tried to transfer this *Nabagraha* panel to Calcutta and failed. It could only be moved through a distance of 200 *Cubits* or approximately 300 feet even after spending a lot of money and applying all kinds of modern techniques of science and technology available at the time. After their first trial was unsuccessful, some years later they cut the panel into two pieces (Page 113) and then also, in spite applying all kinds of techniques, could carry the front potion of it, which was one third of its original thickness, through a distance of one mile only. At last, all their efforts went in vain and even the one-third portion of the *Nabagraha* panel could not be carried through a distance of 2 miles to reach the shore of the sea to be loaded on to the ship. In the present age, with so much development in the field of engineering and technology and extensive availability of transport methods like railways, ships and trams, the block of stone could not be transported to a distance of 2 miles to reach the seashore, then how was it possible for the Odias to carry so easily the stone blocks three times as big over a distance of 150 miles in the 13th Century AD!

In this connection, the gigantic block of stone that was used as the *Kalasha* of the main temple makes one even more surprised. Now, there is no trace of this *Kalasha* and even in the year 1626, when King Narasingha Deba-II carried out the measurement of the temple, the *Kalasha* was not there. The dimension of the *Kalasha* stated in *Madala Panji* is only an estimate. According to *Madala Panji* it was 14 *Kathhi* and 22 *Anguli* or 25 feet and 10½ inches in height. It was made out of a single block of stone and weighed 2000 Ton or 56, 000 *Maunds*.[1] This huge piece of stone approaching the size of a hillock was placed on the main temple at a height of about 200 feet above the ground. Likewise, another similar piece of stone, a little smaller than this one, was placed atop the *Mukhashala* as its *Kalasha*. Apart from these, the *Aruna Stamba* or *Aruna* Pillar and the four pillars built inside the *Mukhashala* to support the second ceiling were each made out of single pieces of stone blocks. The height of the *Aruna Stamba* is 34 feet and that of the pillars existing inside the *Mukhashala* was 40 feet each. The diameter of each of these pillars can be very well imagined from their individual heights. The modern engineers of the present age are simply unable to imagine how these huge blocks of stone were handled there. It was not possible for the British Government to carry one-third portion of the *Nabagraha* Panel weighing originally only 26.5 Tons even after spending much money and applying all kinds of technology; how then was it possible for the Odias to carry such massive stone blocks like the *Kalasha* of the main temple weighing 2000 Tons? Nobody has been able to find an answer to it till date. During the rescue operation of the temple, realising that it was impossible for removing the debris of stone blocks from the temple premises keeping their original form and size intact, the masons had to cut them in to pieces for making the job easier (Page 259). In this situation, when the experienced and famous engineers of the present age of science are baffled by this question and are unable to find an answer, it is not astonishing for the layman to consider the construction of Konarka temple as the work of some divine power.

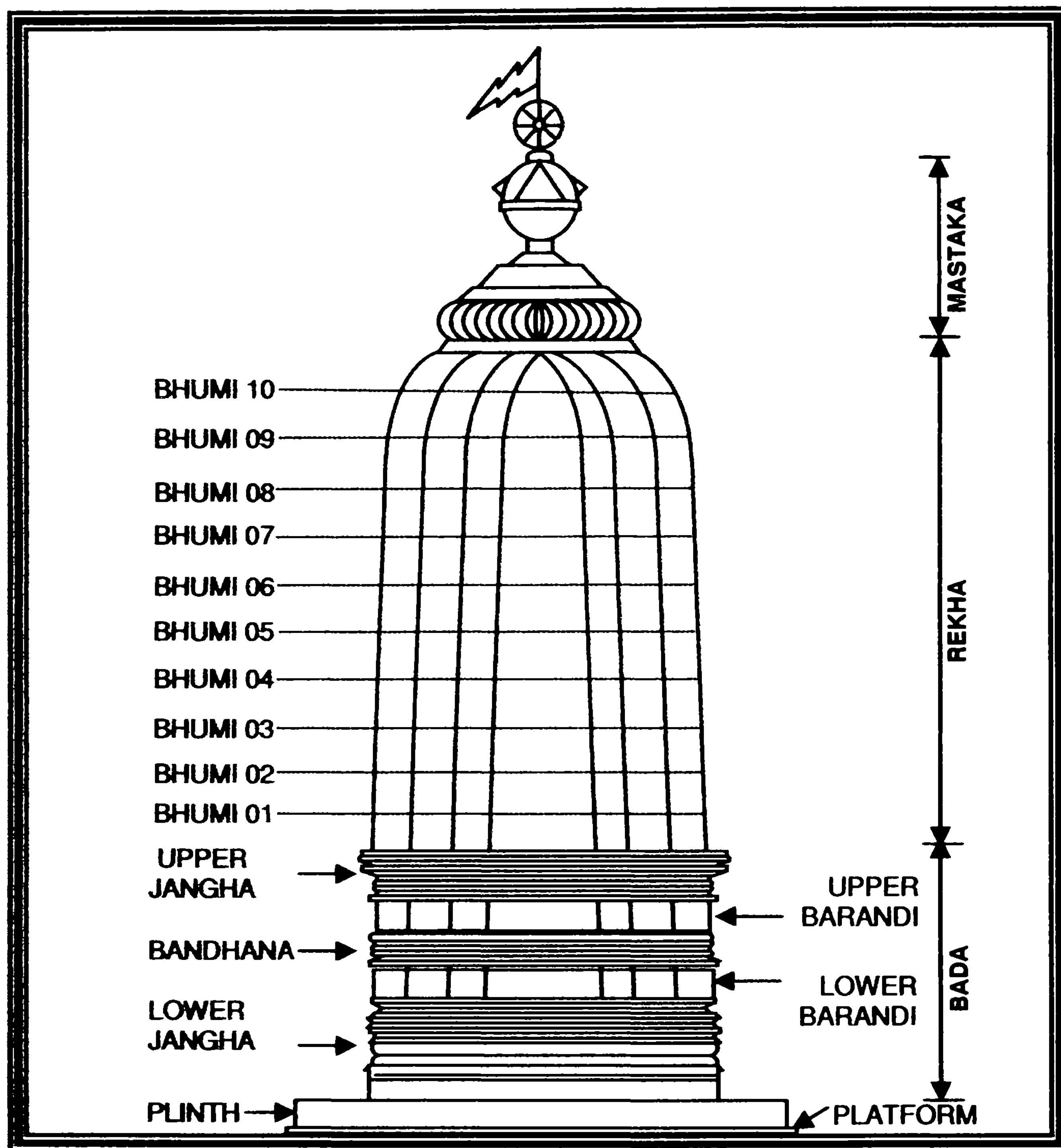
The type of construction of Konarka temple is similar to that of the other temples of Odisha. The *Bada* portion of the main temple is built vertically over the plinth and the *Rekha* portion on the *Bada* with gradual inclination from all sides towards the inside of the temple. The height of the *Rekha* portion was 117 feet.[2] Though it is comparatively easier to construct a *Pidha* roof, the main temple was not of *Pidha* type. Had it been a *Pidha* roof like that of the *Mukhashala* then it could not have been made so high. If the walls are built vertically, then construction becomes even easier. While building a *Rekha* type temple, it is necessary to watch the centre of gravity of the entire mass of the temple along with the centre of gravity of each wall and even that of each block of stone. The gradually inclined walls remain stable by the frictional force exerted on it by the two adjacent walls. Hence, at any point of time two types of forces act on each of the walls. The first one is the downward gravitational force exerted by the earth due to which the walls always have a tendency to fall down and the second force exerted on the wall balancing the gravitational force is the frictional force offered by its two adjacent walls. As long as the two forces balance each other the temple walls remain stable and do not fall.

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1. Report of the Archaeological Survey of India – 1903 – 04 – P. 9 / Bengal District - Gazetteer – Puri - P. 274
2. The *Rekha* portion of a temple is usually twice the height of the *Bada* portion – Manomohan Ganguli

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VERTICAL DIVISION OF REKHA TEMPLES



The Rekha portion of most of the temples of Odisha are divided into ten vertical divisions (Bhumi) by inserting iron beams at these levels and constructing auxiliary roofs there supported by the beams to make them more stable. Small openings were also provided in these roofs for moving up and down the temple. Probably the main temple of Konarka was also built this way.

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In the beginning stage of the construction, the effect of these two forces remains almost same balancing out each other and the walls do not fall. However, if some outside force like severe blow of wind, etc. exert additional force on the temple wall disturbing its centre of gravity aiding in the direction of the gravitational force, then the temple walls are likely to fall. To balance out these additional forces for preventing the temple from falling down, it is necessary either to construct pillars inside the temple to provide additional support to its walls or to increase the frictional force exerted by the walls considerably by placing a very heavy weight at the top of the temple walls to keep them always under heavy pressure. In case of *Rekha* type temples the inside of the temple is not so spacious and the temple is very high making it difficult to construct such high pillars in a cramped space to provide additional support to the walls. It is possible in case of the *Pidha* temples like *Mukhashala* being not so high and having a spacious area inside. Therefore, on the top of the *Rekha* type temples are placed heavy weights like *Amalaka Shila* and *Kalasha*, etc. which add to the beauty of the temple and at the same time make the temples stable, strong and long lasting. If these top portions of a *Rekha* type temple are removed then the entire temple is sure to fall. The deep knowledge and experience of the Odias in the principles of Statics and Dynamics are very well demonstrated in all the *Rekha* type temples of Odisha. However, the speciality of Konarka was that it was much bigger than the other temples of Odisha and hence its *Rekha* portion was accordingly much higher. The constituent stone blocks of the *Rekha* portion were also individually very large in size in comparison to those of the other temples. Hence, it was necessary to have such a huge *Kalasha* placed on the top of the main temple of Konarka to make it stable.

The principle of construction of the *Mukhashala* is different. As in other places, the *Mukhashala* of the temple of Konarka has a *Pidha* type roof unlike *Rekha* type roof of the main temple. In case of a *Pidha* roof, each successive layer of the stone blocks is laid being projected a bit beyond its lower layer and towards the inside of the temple. With increase in height with construction of successive layers, the opening at the top of the roof is gradually reduced. Finally, the roof is closed and completed. Though the *Pidha* type roof is easier to build, it is more problematic in comparison to the *Rekha* type roofs. In spite of its construction being comparatively easier and completed with much less effort, the *Pidha* roof is always constructed up to a much lower height in comparison to *Rekha* type roofs. *Pidha* roof, along with its advantages, has also its inherent disadvantages. In case of *Rekha* type roof, there is no projection of the upper layer over its lower layer as the corbelling between the two adjacent layers is negligible, they are placed almost in a line. Hence these walls require much less pressure from the top to keep the layers stable. However, in case of *Pidha* type roof, each layer is projected to some extent towards the inside of the temple from the layer just below it. In other words, the *Pidha* roof looks like an inverted staircase from inside of the temple. The more the stone block projects towards the inside, the more is the chance of its falling down due to the gravitational force acting on it. Therefore, to make each layer of the roof stable, it is necessary to use comparatively lighter stone blocks in each successive upper layer than the layer just below it. Hence, the stone blocks used in the lower layer are much longer and wider than the stone blocks used in the layer just above it. Therefore, the width of the *Pidha* roof is more than that of the *Rekha* type roof. To maintain the usual proportion in the height of the *Mukhashala* to that of the main temple and as the *Pidha* roofs are completed with construction up to comparatively a much less height, the *Pidha* type temple is usually made much wider than the main temple. Again, as the load of the *Rekha* type roof and its upper portion fall vertically on the *Bada* of the temple, for its stability, the thickness of the walls of the *Bada* is not required to be as thick as in case of the *Pidha* temple. On the contrary, the walls of the *Bada* of a *Pidha* temple are made much thicker for the stability of the temple as the downward force exerted by the *Pidha* and its upper part falls on it not vertically but in an angle making the wall of the *Bada* of the *Mukhashala* prone to fall in the outward direction. The visitor gets stunned on observing the thickness of the walls of the *Mukhashala* and realising the size and the weight of the *Pidha* and the *Amalaka Shila* placed over them.

Regarding the significance of the *Pidha* type roof Dr. James Fergusson writes -

"The whole (of the roof) is crowned by the lotus-shaped dominical ornament, as is universally the case, but which is here of a singularly elegant form. Were such roof as this placed over a colonnade or on a wall much cut up with openings, it would, no doubt be overpoweringly heavy, but placed as it is on a solid wall with only one opening on each face, and that so deeply recessed, I scarcely know one so singularly appropriate and elegant; and the play of light and shade from its bold and varied projections and intervening shadows give it a brilliant and sparkling effect that, I confess, I have never seen equalled."[1]

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1. Dr. J. Fergusson – Picturesque Illustrations of Ancient Architecture in Hindustan – P. 28)

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As said in Chapter-V, the main temple and the *Mukhashala* of Konarka are *Pancharatha* style temples, meaning there are five raised pillars on each sidewalls of the temple. The pillars located on the both the edges *(Kona)* of each wall are known as *Konaka Paga*, the middle one is known as *Raha Paga* and the two pillars placed between the *Raha Paga* and the *Konaka Paga* on each side are known as *Anartha Paga*. The *Anartha Pagas* are constructed with a little more projection from the body of the temple than that of the *Konaka Pagas* and the *Raha Paga* is constructed with more projection than that of the *Anartha Pagas* (Page 75). This way, the walls and the roof of the temple on each side having such raised and recessed portion look very beautiful with the play of light and shade on them. Such type of construction also helps in making the temple strong and long lasting. This *Pancharatha* style looks the same on the *Rekha* portion as it looks on the *Bada* of the temple. Though the *Pagas* divide the outside surface of the *Bada* and the *Paga* in to vertical sections of recessed and projected surfaces, the inside surface of the wall is kept even. Hence the wall of the temple always assumes the most thickness at the *Raha Paga*. The thickness of the wall at the *Anartha Pagas* is more than that of the wall at the *Konaka Pagas* and less than that of the wall at the *Raha Paga*. This means that the thickness of the wall of the *Rekha* portion of the temple is more where the gravitational force affects more. The edge portions of each sidewalls are much safer than the middle portion of the wall as the frictional force exerted by both the adjacent walls partially neutralises the gravitational force preventing the fall of the wall. However, at the middle portion or near the *Raha Paga*, the tendency of the wall to fall is more because of the gravitational force and absence of the frictional force of the sidewalls. Hence the wall at the *Raha Paga* is made with the maximum thickness by projecting the *Raha Paga* to the maximum required limit. Of course, making the cross section of the temple circular would have served the same purpose but at the expense of its beautiful appearance. The sculptors of the temples at Puri and Bhubaneswar though have not made the temples circular in shape; they have not been able to maintain the required rectangular shape and thereby compromising with its appearance. However, the speciality of the sculptors of Konarka is that, even the *Pagas* are more developed here the rectangular appearance of the temple has been kept intact. The sculptors have served the most important purpose by intelligently dividing the temple walls with the *Pagas*.

All the temples at Konarka were built with combination of *Pidha* and *Rekha* styles. With the *Rekha* or the *Pidha* style construction the roofs of the temples are not closed completely. To close the roof, iron beams were placed at the rooftop and the Beki Chakada (a circular stone block placed at the neck of the temple) was placed over it. To make it stronger, the *Rekha* type temple is usually divided into ten planes (Bhumi) along its height beyond the *Bada* (Page 232). The temple of Konarka was also divided into ten or more horizontal planes and at each plane a roof supported by iron beams was constructed. There was a passage through each roof to move up or down the temple. Because of these additional roofs at different planes the chance of the *Rekha* portion of the temple falling inward was greatly reduced. There were four huge pillars inside the *Mukhashala* (Chapter -VI) each made of a single block of stone. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra says that a second roof below the *Pidha* of the *Mukhashala* supported by iron beams placed over these pillars was constructed inside it. Hence, neither in *Mukhashala* nor in the main temple any arch was constructed as is done in present time. Not only in Konarka, arches are not found in any of the ancient temples in Odisha. For this reason some critics assume that, in the ancient days, the Odias did not have the skill to construct arches. Bishan Swarup says, "The origin of the pyramidal roof of the Mohana & c., need not be gone into, as for such big structure desired to last for hundreds of years, that form of roofing was the only possible one, in an age when the principle of arch and dome were unknown, and making of beams and girders to span big widths was practically impossible."[1] Hence, as per Bishan Swarup, since the skill for constructing arches was not known in that age, the roofs were constructed like the pyramids, by placing the stone blocks successively indented inwards with each layer additionally supported by beams. He also said somewhere else that, there is no evidence to prove that the Odias had the skill to construct arches.[2] Dr. W. W. Hunter also says, "At that time the Hindu sculptors did not have the skill to construct arches."[3] Likewise, according to many critics, the Hindu or the Odias did not have the skill to construct arches and hence it was not built into the temples. Of course, not many arches are found in the temples of Odisha, but why? Is it that the arch was a problematic structure or the Odias did not have the skill to construct it? Those who had the skill to build such a huge and wonderful temple like the temple of Konarka, for them the construction of an arch must have been a minor job. However, analysing the technology behind the arches, it is found that, the arches are not very safe in terms of durability. Each constituent piece of brick or stone used on the arched portion remains stable by exerting force on its adjacent blocks placed on both of its sides and the resultant force is finally exerted on both the pillars supporting the arch. Hence, to keep an arch stable the pillars supporting it have to be adequately strong. Again, where the pillars are constructed vertically it becomes easier to support the load of the arches. However, in case of *Rekha* type temples

1. BishanSwarup – Konark – P. 49
2. Ibd. P. 58
3. Dr. William Wilson Hunter – Orissa – Vol. I – P. 276

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the walls of the roof are progressively inclined inwards or corbelled and are not vertical like that of the *Bada* portion. Hence, to support huge arches, each wall of the temple would have to be made very thick to prevent its collapse. Therefore, incorporation of arches into the temples of Odisha would have made the walls of the *Rekha* temples much thicker, wasting huge amount of labour, materials, time and money. Therefore, it rather shows the intelligence of the Odias in not constructing arches for temples and adopting the right technology in its place that saved huge amount of labour, materials, time and money.

Another reason for which the Odias did not incorporate arches into temple construction is that they did not think that the arch remains stable or lasts very long unless a heavy load is placed over it. The more the load on the arch the more stable it becomes and the more the load on the arch, the more is the demand for stronger and thicker walls or columns to support it. Hence, in case of the temples of Odisha, specially the temple of Konarka which carries such heavy loads like *Amalaka Shila, Khapuri, Kalasha,* etc., the walls would have required to be made very thick, beyond imagination, hampering the overall beauty of the temple apart from wasting materials, time, labour and money.

In general, the arch does not remain stable for very long periods of time. It is even said today, "An arch never sleeps". It means that the arch always has a tendency to fall down. As understood from the above saying, even the modern architects are not confident about the use of arches in structures meant to last very long. Hence, it is quite natural for the architects of the ancient age not to have confidence on the stability of the arches and to avoid the use of it in temples and monuments built to last for thousands of years. Mr. Cole after visiting the temple of Hara Devaji at Gobardhan near Agra had once said, "The Hindus were very uncertain about the stability of the Arches."[1] The famous engineer Manomohan Ganguli writes, "I do not think that the Uriya architects were ignorant of the principles of a radiating arch."[2] Whatever might have been the case in that age, there is no doubt that the Odias in the present age have enough experience about the construction of arches. Even then, they are never seen building arches into any temple, be it large or small. The architects of Puri and Bhubaneswar temples were so concerned with the stability of the temples that they had to intentionally avoid the use of arches in these structures. Similarly, the Egyptians also had severe doubt about the stability of the arches in structures meant to last for very long period of time. In fact, had the construction of Athharanala (a culvert having 18 spans at the entry point of Puri town) been executed incorporating arches of modern times, it is doubtful that it would have lasted for so long, spanning over thousands of years.

Manomohan Ganguli, the famous engineer, states that if the materials (bricks and stone blocks) available are not large enough then it becomes necessary to build arches. Considering the large size of the stone blocks used in construction of the temples of Odisha, especially the temple of Konarka, incorporating arches to the temple was a very difficult proposition and also quite unnecessary. The opinion of Bishan Swarup such as, "the Odias were ignorant about the technology of arches," shows his myopic vision on the subject. The beautiful arch in front of the *Mukteshwara* temple in Bhubaneswar still exists there in pristine condition. Again, in Puri and other places many arches are also seen on the old *Dolamandapas* or swings built on platforms for the deities. The arches built on these swings are not made out of a single stone block. Rather, like the modern day arches, they are built of a number of small blocks of stone or bricks. Apart from all these independent arches in the open, some arches are also found in certain temples, like the one at the *Singha Dwara* (Lions Gate) or the main entrance of the *Gundicha* temple in Puri carrying a *Nabagraha* panel on it. This arch was not built in the recent past or with the skill acquired recently. Lastly, it is also known from the description given by Abul Fazl that, a very large arch was built in front of the eastern gate of the *Mukhashala* of Konarka temple and the *Nabagraha* panel was placed over it. Hence, considering all these factors, the statements like, "Odias did not have the technology to construct arches," show the lack of knowledge about the subject of those who hold such opinions.

Therefore, it cannot be said that, the reason for not incorporating arches in to construction of the temples was the lack of such skill with the ancient Odia sculptors. Rather, the Odias had the skill to build arches and had in fact built some arches at different places. However, they did not adopt arches into construction of the temple of Konarka and at other places, as it would have resulted in the diminution of the overall beautiful appearance of the temple by constructing much thicker walls and thereby also unnecessarily wasting huge quantities of materials. Even after accepting all these defects, the temple would not have survived till date. Hence, the Odia sculptors have shown their intelligence and skill by adopting the pyramid type construction to save the wastage of labour,

1. Cole – Buildings in the neighbourhood of Agra - Archaeological Survey of India – P. 34
2. Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P. 108

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THE PROBABLE SITE OF THE IRON FACTORY OF THE TEMPLE LOCATED IN THE VILLAGE OF OREI IN MAHALAPADA CLOSE TO THE BANKS OF RIVER KUSHABHADRA

Iron beams and other materials of metal were being manufactured in a workshop set up at this location. The river Kushabhadra (Liyakhia) provided for easier transportation of these heavy materials to the construction site of the temple through the waterways including that of the Patharabuha Nala.



A LABOURER FAMILY TAKING A BREAK FOR COOKING FOODWHILE CARRYING STONE BLOCKS BY BULLOCK-CART



DRAGGING A HUGE STONE BLOCK BY ROPE

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materials and funds and also not to compromise with the beautiful appearance and durability of the temples. Dr. Hunter has rightly said, "When well built, such arches are almost indestructible. Even after the keystone with whole of one side has fallen, the other half stands self-supporting and I was particularly struck with the proofs which a native builder in one of the Tributary Hill States adduced at their stability. It is necessarily a heavy style of architecture, but the artistic Hindu has succeeded in imparting to it a surprising degree of his own like and supple grace."[1] Hence, the pyramid type technology adopted by the Odias in the past was no way inferior in terms of beautiful appearance or in its durability to the modern technology used to build arches today. As the sculptors of Odisha did not adopt the arches, they had to use iron beams in construction. Odisha has always been famous for its iron deposits. In the past, iron was produced in huge quantities from the mines in Talcher. Even today, iron ore in huge quantities are being quarried from the mines of Mayurbhanj. Of course, there is no proof available now to know from which other Tributary Hill States iron ore was being procured during the period the temple of Konarka was being constructed. Examining the huge size of the iron beams used in the temples of Odisha and especially those used in the temple of Konarka, it can be inferred that, a lot of iron was being produced here from the ores procured from its mines, and also plants were set up at the temple sites to manufacture iron beams and other articles for use in construction (Page 236). Many famous engineers are surprised looking at the size and the shape of the iron beams now lying in the compound of Konarka temple. The largest of these beams is 35 feet and 9 inches in length, 10 inches in height and 8 inches in width. The speciality of the beams is that, the width and the height at the centre of the beams are 1 to 2 inches more than the width and height at their both ends (Page 163).

The iron beams used in construction of the temple of Konarka are not similar to the beams made now. As per M. H. Arnott,[2] to cast such beams, first iron bars of 2 to 3 inches in width and 1 foot or 1½ feet in length are made. Then, as per the required length, width and height of the beam these bars are placed side by side and one above the other in temporary moulds and molten iron is poured over it for the beam to take the final shape and also to fill up the gaps in between the constituent bars (Page 163). However, Bishan Swarup does not agree with Arnott. As per Bishan Swarup, the smaller iron bars were heated enough to join them with each other and then they were made to take the shape of the beams by hammering. However, on examining certain beams lying at Konarka, it is found that, at some places there are gaps in between the iron bars looking like the molten iron did not reach the place (Page 163). No hammering marks were also found on the beams to prove Bishan Swarup's assumptions to be right. Hence, the assumption of M. H. Arnott regarding making of the iron beams seems to be more appropriate.

Whatever be the making process, even in this age of science, one gets surprised looking at the size of these iron beams and finding about their load tolerance capacities. In that age it was quite natural for the ancient Odias not to be aware of the new and modern process for production of iron that was developed over time with the advancement of science. It also might not be expected that, at the time of construction of the temple of Konarka, the industry and the manufacturing plants for iron were so widely set up or developed in the State. Under this circumstance, one gets surprised knowing about the Odias' huge manufacturing activity of iron products. Again, a fact that surprises everybody is that the central part of the iron beams used in Konarka is a little thicker than what it is at their both ends. In other words, the thickness at different points of the beam was made as per the expected amount of force presumed to be exerted at the respective individual points. The more the force was likely to be exerted at a point, the more was the thickness at that point of the beam. Hence, both Dr. Fergusson and Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra have said that, the construction and the shape of the iron beams show the scientific insight that the ancient Odias had regarding the matter.

On examining the strength of the iron beam used in the temple of Bhubaneswar in the laboratory of Shibapur Engineering College, Manomohan Ganguli found it to be 560 *Maunds* or 20 Ton per square inch.[3] He further states that, in England the steel manufactured just 40 years back was able only to bear a load of 23 Tons per square inch. Manomohan Ganguli feels that the Odias could have also increased the strength of the iron beams further had they been required to do so. He also said that he had seen much stronger specimens of iron beams than the one he got tested in the laboratory. There is no doubt that the beams used in the temple of Konarka were much stronger having more load bearing capacity than those used in the temple of Bhubaneswar. A very famous British engineer writes, "Nothing heretofore brought to light in the History of Metallurgy seems more striking

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1. Dr. William Wilson Hunter – Orissa – Vol. I – P. 227
2. M. H. Arnott – Bengal District - Gazetteer - Puri – P. 273
3. Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P. 263

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to the reason as well as the imagination, than this fact that from the remote time when Hengist was ruling in Kent, and Cerdic landing to plunder our barbarous ancestors in Sussex down to that of our third Henry, while all Europe was in the worst darkness, and confusion of the Middle Ages – when the largest and the best forging producible in Christendom was an axe or a sword-blade, these ancient people of India, xxxx possessed a great iron manufacture whose products Europe even half a century ago could not have equalled."[1] In 1905 another famous European engineer had said in his presidential speech, "We are surprised to think that with what skill the ancient Indians could manufacture such huge iron products (like the iron pillar of Delhi) in spite of all the shortcomings of that age and before the exhibition of 1851 it is doubtful to say if all the iron manufacturing plants of Europe and America even jointly could have manufactured a product like the iron pillar located in Delhi." It can be said here that the iron beams of Konarka are much bigger than the iron pillar of Delhi in all respects. The weight of the iron pillar of Delhi is 18 Ton, height 22 feet and its circumference is 16 inches. The length of the iron beam of Konarka is 35 feet and 9 inches and its circumference is 36 inches. The weight of the beam is more than 90 Ton. Hence, one iron beam of Konarka is equivalent to five iron pillars of Delhi. Since the iron pillar of Delhi surprised the modern scientific world so much, the unparalleled skill of the Odias in the field of iron manufacturing can easily be assumed from the quality of the iron beams of Konarka manufactured by them.

After all, how could the Odias transport the huge blocks of stone to the temple site from such distant places? How the Odias could lift the huge stone blocks approaching the size of a small rock and the giant size iron beams to such a great height of the temple to work there? These are the most important questions to which nobody has yet ever replied satisfactorily. Many famous engineers have visited Konarka to find an answer to this question. However, nobody has yet found a proper explanation for it. It is assumed that the river-ways were being used to transport the stone blocks from distant places to the temple site. Even now there is a place called *Patharaganda* (stone gorge) in the River Kushabhadra near Bedpur and the local people say that the stone blocks for construction of Konarka temple were being transported through that gorge (Page 37). As said in Chapter-III, stone blocks were being carried to Konarka through the River Chandrabhaga. Still then it is difficult to imagine now how such huge stone blocks were being carried to Konarka and with what type of vehicle or craft.

To raise these huge stone blocks and the iron beams to such great heights to work on the temple is even more surprising. The Odias of the 12th and 13th Century AD were working with these huge stone blocks and iron beams at a height of 200 feet above the ground and handled them as if they were working with wooden rafters. As said by Dr. Hunter, "They handled their colossal beams of iron and stone with as much ease and plasticity as modern workmen put up pine rafters; and fitted in blocks of twenty to thirty tons with absolute precision at a height of eighty feet."[2] Many learned people have lost their head over the matter in their quest for finding a clue to the way the job was executed. M. H. Arnott was engaged for some time in the rescue mission of the temple of Konarka. The procedure for construction of the temples discovered by him as an answer to the above-mentioned question is described below.

In Odisha, while constructing large size temples, the inside of the temple was being filled with sand and also it was being buried under sand from outside after the *Bada* of the temple was constructed up to a certain height. As the temple gained height with successive layers of construction it was being covered with sand. The process used to create a huge sand dune on completion of the temple. After the work on the temple was complete in all respects, the sand was cleaned from inside and outside of the temple. These huge stone blocks could be raised to such heights by dragging them on these huge sand dunes covering the temple. Regarding it Arnott says, "...... the temple was constructed on a heap of sand, the heavy stones ramped up, and when the work is completed, the sand from the inside was all removed by means of the four doors." Arnott also states that, as sand was being removed from the temples after their completion and dumped nearby, many sand dunes are still seen near the temples of Konarka and Puri.[3]

Of course, many sand dunes are seen near the sea beach. However, they do not prove Arnott's assumption so easily. The sand dunes do not stay at one place for long as the sand mass is transported continuously from one place to the other by the blowing wind and like this, over time, the entire sand dune is transported from one place to the other. It is described in Chapter-III how the turbulent flow of River Chandrabhaga and the mouth of River Kushabhadra have been gradually filled up with sand. In this situation, it is impossible for the sand mass

1 Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P. 265
2 Dr. William Wilson Hunter – Orissa – Vol. I – P. 297
3. M.H Arnott – Bengal District Gazetteer – Puri – P. 277 & Report of the Archaeological Survey of India – 1902-03 – P. 49

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ONE OF THE CONSTRUCTION DIAGRAMS (SUTRAS) DRAWN ON THE FLOOR NEAR THE PLATFORM

It is said that these diagrams known as Sutras in the ancient construction manual of the Odias (Shilpashastra) were drawn to facilitate the planning of construction.



PROBABLE LOCATION OF THE HOUSE OF SHIBEI SANTARA AT BAYALISHBATI, ERBANG, GOP

Shibei Santara's residence was close to the temple of Gangeshwari and the 1200 sculptors with the huge number of labourers engaged in construction were living in nearby villages. The place once belonging to the Sutradhara or the chief architect of the temple of Konarka, Shibei Santara now belongs to somebody else.

The statements made regarding the locations of the iron factory, Shibei Santara's residence, Patharabuha Nala (Page 37), Daha Upara (Page 37) and about the temple of Gangeshwari are based on information received from the local people that was passed on to them by word of mouth from generation to generation since the time of construction of the temple of Konarka and also on some physical evidences still existing at various locations in and around Konarka.

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used for construction of the temple to have existed there until it is noticed by Arnott. If the sand dunes found near the temple are there because sand was used in construction of the temple then the reason for the presence of sand dunes at far away places from the temple is also to be determined. At Puri and Konarka sand is available in plenty, but there is no sand available in Bhubaneswar. Then how were the temples constructed there? Did they have to procure sand from Puri and after completion of construction of the temple was the sand carried back to Puri again? Finding the hills like Khandagiri near Bhubaneswar, Arnott might say that, like the sand was used in Konarka and Puri temples, stone was used for construction of the Bhubaneswar temple and after the completion of the temple the stone blocks were removed from there and dumped at a place creating the Khandagiri Hills.

The temple of Konarka might have been built by the method suggested by Arnott, still then, it is not believable even to assume that the sculptors who utilising their intelligence and skill carried such huge blocks of stone from so far off places would have taken the help of the heaps of sand to lift these stone blocks to the top of the temple. To show some respect to the sculptors of Konarka, it could rather be said that with the use of some kind of machine and the whole-hearted effort of innumerable sculptors and other workers, these hillock-size stone blocks and the huge iron beams were raised to the top of the temple. That kind of machine is not used today or the present machines do not have that kind of efficiency and capacity. Konarka reminds us that, 'the present cannot always be assumed as more developed than the past, in all spheres, and it is also true that whatever was possible some centuries ago could not even be imagined by the present generation to be possible today.'

In construction of the temple of Konarka, no lime paste, cement or any other kind of mortar was used to join the stone blocks. Even then, they were so snugly joined together that no gap was seen in between the adjacent blocks of stone. In other temples, the stone blocks were held together by iron clamps. However, there is some problem with the use of iron clamps. Coming in contact with oxygen from the atmosphere the iron clamps get corroded and then start to swell. This swelling of the iron clamps poses a risk of breaking apart the stone blocks. Keeping this problem in mind, the sculptors of Konarka have very rarely used the iron clamps in construction of the temple.

Lastly, the critics who even after visiting Konarka in person say that there is not much to say about the engineering involved in construction of the temple of Konarka, have also written at least a chapter each about the subject. Bishan Swarup has stated in his book KONARKA that, "There is not much to say about the engineering of Orissan temples."[1] Even after fall of the main temple of Konarka and with its present devastated state, the image it projects and the feeling it creates softens the heart of the most stubborn person. Standing in front of the temple of Konarka, the person suddenly losses his personality, forgets his intelligence, judgement and pride and considers himself very small and insignificant. The visitor to Konarka gets as happy looking at its architecture and sculpture as he gets astonished thinking about the engineering involved in construction of the temple. Sir John Marshal, after a visit to Konarka writes –

"There is no monument of Hinduism, I think, that is at once so stupendous and so perfectly-proportioned, as the Black Pagoda, and none which leaves so deep an impression on the memory."[2]

Konarka is the product of the extreme knowledge, experience and skill of the sculptors of Odisha. On each of the stone blocks of the temple of Konarka are carved so many happy events of the history and so many wonderful stories of the social life of the Odias. As the creeper motifs carved on the stone blocks create a quest in the mind of the visitor for acquiring knowledge about the history of sculptural skill of the Odias, the same way each human figure carved here projects the waves of its emotions in front of the visitor. The entire temple and its huge and mountain-like stone blocks seem like pouncing on the visitor standing in its front and snatching away all the knowledge and thinking power from him. No writer has yet been able to discover all the wealth of Konarka and it also cannot be imagined if ever human effort in this direction will be successful. However, within all the grandeur, knowledge and wealth and all the beauty and pride of Konarka, the holy person Langula Narasingha Deba and Sibei Shantara seem to have been always present there in front of the visitors, being reflected from each and every stone block the temple is made of.

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1. Bishan Swarup – Konark – P. 58
2. Sir John Marshal – Bengal District Gazetteer – Puri

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THE TEMPLE OF GANGESHWARI (BACK SIDE) AT BAYALISHBATI IN ERABANGA, GOP
The sculptural style of Gangeshwari Temple is quite similar to that of Konarka Temple

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THE ARCH IN FRONT OF GANGESHWARI TEMPLE

The temple of Gangeshwari is located in Bayalishbati, Erabanga of Gop area nearby the probable location of Shibei Santara's residence. It is said that before starting the construction of the temple at Konarka Shibei Santara offered a coconut and puja (worship) to Goddess Gangeshwari for smooth sailing of his assignment.

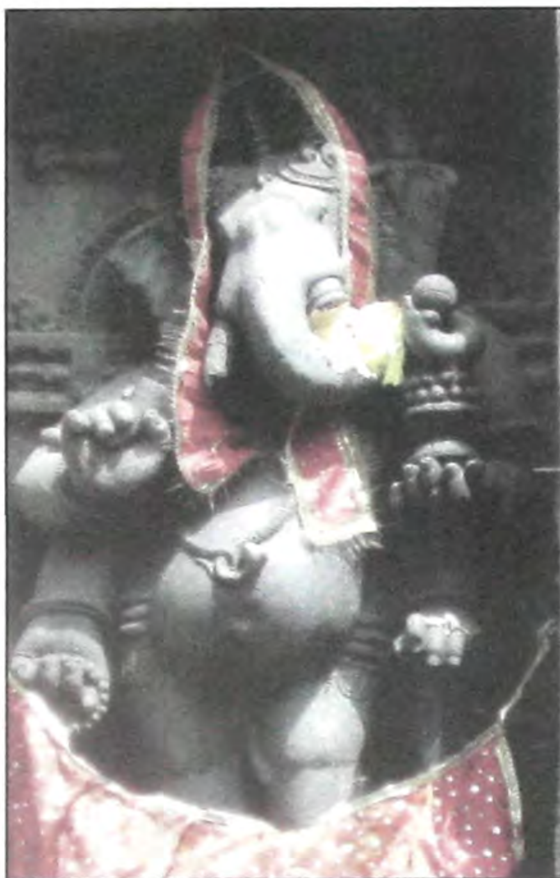
The arch in front of this temple and also at some other places confirm that the Odia architects at the time had the technology for construction of arches, and as it was not a preferred technology for construction of temples for the reasons cited by Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra it was not being adopted for the purpose.

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IMAGE PLACED ON THE WALL OF THE TEMPLE OF GANGESHWARI AS PARSHWA DEVATA

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IMAGES PLACED ON THE WALLS OF THE TEMPLE OF GANGESHWARI




SOME OTHER IMAGES PLACED ON THE WALLS OF THE TEMPLE OF GANGESHWARI

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CHAPTER XIV

FALL OF THE MAIN TEMPLE



COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

KONARKA TEMPLE COMPLEX IN 1837 - ILLUSTRATION BY JAMES FERGUSSON
A portion of the wall of the Rekha type main temple was still standing at the time looking like a ship with its sail raised.

The temple of Konarka survives now by its *Mukhashala* only. The portion of the *Mukhashala* existing now is as good as not existing at all. Thinking about the fall of the main temple of Konarka, a question naturally arises in the mind, "Why did such a beautiful, huge and strong temple built with so much funds and effort collapse?" Of course, it is quite natural for such questions to probe the mind while thinking about the fall of Konarka, a temple built with such wonderful engineering skill. In fact, out of all the topics about Konarka, the one that first attracts the attention of the visitors is its fall. Anybody who visits Konarka even once has his individual opinion regarding the fall of the temple. In Odisha, as in the case of any other matter, regarding the fall of the temple many different opinions of different learned writers and also some legends associated with it are circulating among the people. It is not necessary to analyse here the opinions of each and every writer in detail. Of course, the opinions of some famous writers, who have, with their deep research and powerful writings, made Konarka famous in the country and abroad, will be discussed in this chapter; otherwise it will be like ignoring and dishonouring them and also not paying any attention to this very important topic.

Scholars have always dismissed the legends related to the fall of the temple. These legends are not only heard from the local people in and around Konarka, but also from the people of other far-off places in Odisha who

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also seem to be quite familiar with the topic. Therefore, it seems necessary that the legends be discussed here for analysing their usefulness in finding out the real cause of the fall of the temple.



COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

KONARKA TEMPLE COMPLEX BEFORE RESTORATION IN 1890

The surviving portion of the main temple is seen here buried under the stone debris behind the Mukhashala as viewed from the south-side. The damaged south-side entrance of Mukhashala is visible in this picture.

The legend –

A huge stone-magnet was placed at the head of the main temple of Konarka. Like the rock of the Sailor Sinbad, this stone-magnet was attracting the ships sailing in the sea near Konarka and dragging them to the shore. As a result, many sailors lost their ships and became destitute. One day, during the rule of the Moghuls, a ship was sailing by Konarka with some Muslim sailors and passengers on board. Being dragged by the stone- magnet, the ship was stranded at the shore of the sea near Konarka. Being disgusted, the sailors and the passengers attacked the temple, broke it down, causing its fall and took away with them the stone-magnet that was placed at its top. As the temple collapsed and became desecrated with the entry of the Muslims, the priests abandoned it and transferred the deity of *Suryanarayana*, the presiding deity of Konarka, to the temple in Puri. After being abandoned, the temple gradually deteriorated due to lack of care and maintenance. Again, whatever portion of the temple survived there as remnants that also vanished with the ravages of the cruel and turbulent flow of time.

Even though the legend mentioned above describes some untrue and imaginary events, it cannot be discarded as entirely untrue and baseless. It has been said earlier at many places that, if legends are dismissed as totally imaginary and unreal, then the ancient history of a land like Odisha can never be retrieved. The legend described above is a little different from the others as the imaginary portion in it is much less than the portion of truth contained in it. It would not be fair to totally lose confidence on this legend and not to consider the facts hidden behind the small fraction of the untrue events it contains. It will be also like showing disrespect to the people who have kept the truth in it alive till date by passing it on, orally from generation to generation.



COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

THE INSIDE OF MUKHASHALA BEFORE RESTORATION IN 1890

It is partially filled up with stone blocks and iron beams due to collapse of the false ceiling and the columns. During restoration it was completely filled with sand and sealed from outside and now it is in the same state.

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Analysing the legend stated above the following historical facts come to the forefront -

01. A large *Kumbha* or *Kalasha* stone (described as stone-magnet in the legend) was placed at the top of the main temple of Konarka.
02. Some relationship of the *Kumbha* stone existed with the ships sailing in the sea.
03. The temple was invaded by the Muslims.
04. The *Kumbha* Stone of Konarka was taken away by the Muslim invaders.
05. The main temple of Konarka fell down.
06. The priests abandoned the temple after it turned unholy by the entrée of the Muslims.
07. The presiding deity of Konarka, *Suryanarayana* was transferred to and installed in the temple of Puri.

In fact all the seven above-described events are true events backed by history. Justification and analysis of each of the above-mentioned facts are stated below, one by one.

01. *Kumbha* stone-

At the top of the main temple of Konarka was a *Kumbha* stone. In the previous chapter it has been said that a huge block of stone weighing about 2000 Ton was used as *Kalasha* of the main temple of Konarka. Since it is carved like a *Kalasha* or *Kumbha*, meaning a water pot or a pitcher, it is named as *Kalasha* or *Kumbha* stone. We find no untrue or imaginary components involved here in calling the *Kalasha* as *Kumbha Pathara*. Gradually, the people have colloquially called the *Kumbha Pathara* as *Chumbaka Pathara* or stone-magnet.



COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

THE FRONT OF MUKHASHALA IN 1890

Shows the damaged east-side (main) entrance

02. Relationship of the stone with ships sailing in the sea-

Of course, it is true that the ships were not drawn to the shore by the stone placed at the top of the temple, but as the temple of Konarka was located on the seashore, since ages it served as a major landmark for the sailors for guidance of the ships sailing in that route. The sea was shallow near Puri; the sailors were warned about it by the temples of Puri and Konarka. For this reason there are innumerable mentions about the temples of Puri and Konarka as White Pagoda and Black Pagoda respectively in the old diaries of the sailors. Out of all the European sailors, the Agent and Governor of Fort St. George (in Madras) Sir Streyn Sham Master, was the first sailor to have written about seeing the temples of Puri and Konarka while sailing back after visiting Balasore on December 23 in the year 1675.[1]

In the year 1756, similar descriptions have also been given in a book written about travelling along the coast of India. In 1764 the French map prepared by Croisey indicated Konarka as "Pagoda Noir". In 1780, Dunn wrote in his travel diary, "Four leagues E. and N. of Jagrenath Pagoda is the Black Pagoda, which at a distance (like the former) resembles a large ship under sail but on a nearer view it loses somewhat of its magnitude."[2] From such frequent mentions about Konarka in the writings of the European sailors, it may be assumed that the temple of Konarka was also acting as an important landmark for the Muslim sailors. The sailor, being a Muslim or a

1. December 23rd:- We sailed in sight of the Black pagoda and the White Pagoda. The latter is that place called Jaggernat, to which Hindus from all parts of India come on pilgrimage." – Diary of Sir Streyn Sham Master, Agent and Governor of Fort St. George

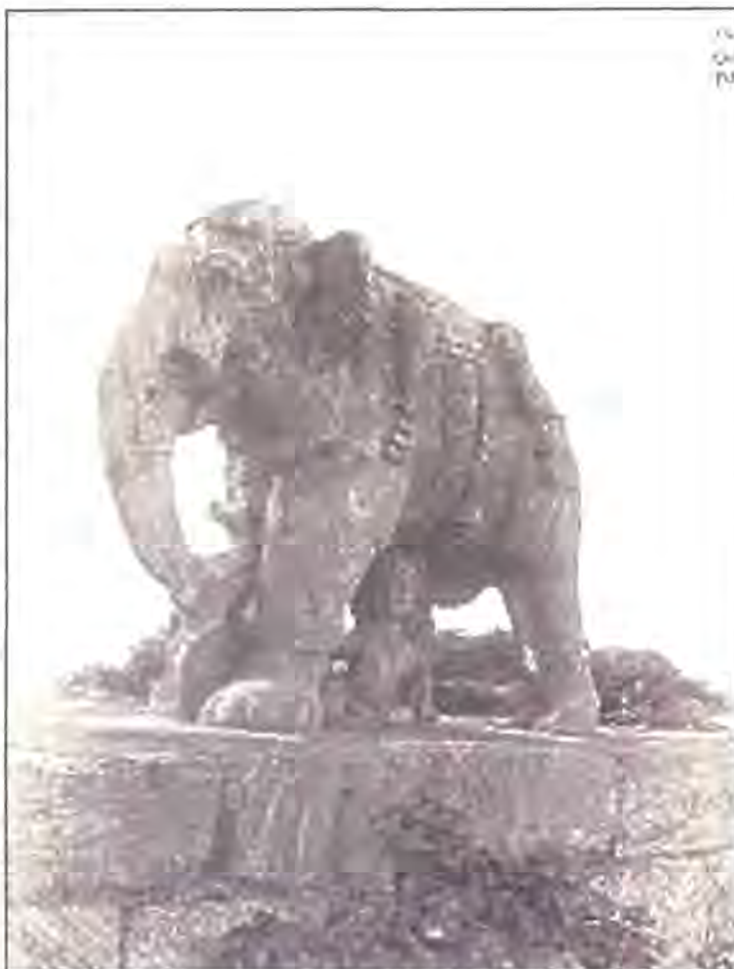
2. Old Sailing Directory of Dunn (1780) –Bengal District - Gazetteer – Puri - P. 393

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European or a pirate, while travelling along the coast of Puri must have been sighting the temple of Konarka. As the saying goes, 'A distant mountain is always beautiful,' the temple of Konarka was looking gorgeous from the sea. All the descriptions stated above were written for the *Mukhashala* only. Hence, how gorgeous the main temple of Konarka, when it existed, would have looked to the sailors in the sea and how much attention it would have received from them can be well imagined. Therefore, to have a closer look, the sailors might have been anchoring their ships near the coast and coming to visit the temple of Konarka. It was not unusual for the common man to have believed that the stone at the top of the temple was drawing the ships to the shore.

03. Invasion of the temple by the Muslims-

It is a historical fact that Konarka was invaded by the Muslims. This fact will be described later. Now, it is to be stated only that the invaders might or might not have been the sailors. The way the temple was exposed to the sailors in the sea and they were attaching so much importance to it, it was possible for the local people to consider the actual invaders as sailors. Even today, it is heard from the local people of Konarka that the Portuguese pirates, after looting the ships passing through this coast, were taking shelter in the compound of Konarka. For a very old legend surviving for so long, to consider the real invaders as the pirate sailors is not unusual under this situation. The truth behind all the other points raised in this legend depends on this third point discussed here. At the right time and place, all the other points will be discussed. First of all, the opinions of the famous writers who have rejected this legend considering it as imaginary, baseless and untrue are to be examined for their validity.



COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

ONE OF THE ELEPHANTS BEFORE RESTORATION IN 1890

Some writers say that the temple was never consecrated as it fell down soon after its completion. M. H. Arnott comes first amongst this group of writers. As said earlier, Arnott was engaged for some time in the rescue operation of Konarka and thus he had the opportunity to see the temple in detail. The procedure, as determined by Arnott, supposed to have been adopted for construction of the temple has been discussed in the previous chapter. Basing on that so-called construction procedure, he determined the reason for the fall of the temple.

Arnott writes, "It is nearly certain that the *Deula* fell from the same cause, viz., that when the sand was removed from the interior, the weight above was not great enough to resist the inward tendency of the corbelling to fall in. The heap of the stones is the direct proof that the result of the catastrophe when it did take place hurled the stones inwards and not outwards, had it been latter, the heap would have been a scattered one, instead of which it is remarkably a compact one. xxxxxxxxxxx. Now in order to counteract this and to prevent the walls from buckling inwards, it is necessary to weight them.[1]"

The construction procedure on which Arnott based his above-mentioned opinion has been discussed towards the end of the previous chapter. The construction of the temple with the help of the heaps of sand seems impossible, and the same way, less weight placed at the top of the temple as the reason for its fall seems unreal. As his opinion is derived from a baseless assumption, it cannot be accepted as the real reason for the fall of the temple.

1. M. H. Arnott – Bengal District Gazetteer – Puri – P. 279

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COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA



COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

DIFFERENT PORTIONS OF THE PIDHA OF MUKHASHALA BEFORE RESTORATION IN 1890

Arnott, to support his theory regarding the procedure adopted for construction of the temple, cited the inward fall of the walls of the temple as an example. However, this evidence is not strong enough to support his statement. Since the walls of the temple were constructed with a gradual inward inclination, had they been broken for any reason, they would have fallen towards the inside of the temple anyway. Hence, the walls of the temple falling inward do not support any special reason and specifically not the theory promulgated by Arnott. Abul Fazl's description of Konarka has been stated earlier (Chapter-IV) in this book. While narrating about Konarka he has never mentioned about its ruined state. Rather, it is apparent from his descriptions that, at the time, the main temple and the *Mukhashala*, etc., were in undamaged condition and even if any portion was in broken state then that did not do any harm to the overall appearance of the temple. Of course, Abul Fazl did not personally visit the temple or saw it with his own eyes. He wrote about it only after listening to the descriptions given by different people. Even then, as he was so much impressed by the temple, he would have definitely mentioned about its ruined condition had the temple been in that state. Hence, it is presumed that the temple was in almost undamaged condition in the last part of the 16th Century AD. If the temple had fallen soon after it was completed in the 13th Century AD, then how did Abul Fazl describe it after 300 years of its construction? Again, as stated by Fergusson, in 1839 one side of the *Rekha* portion of the temple existed up to a height of 120 feet. Had the temple been broken down in the 13th Century due to defects in construction, then one of the walls would not have remained standing up to such a great height for 600 years, that is, till the 19th Century AD.

Lastly, during the rescue operation of the Konarka, an elegant throne (Page 86) was found inside the main temple (Chapter-V). If the temple fell down soon after the sand mass was removed from its inside after completion of its construction, then how is it that a throne was constructed inside the temple? It is impossible for the throne to have been constructed inside the sand filled temple before construction of the temple was completed. Again, it is apparent from the marks visible on the throne and the appearance of it that the temple was consecrated after its construction was completed, the deity was installed and the worship of *Suryanarayana* continued there for quite a long time. Bishan Swarup, on finding certain marks on the throne also assumes that, the worship of the deity was going on for quite a long time in the present temple of Konarka.[1] It has also been stated earlier that such marks are still present and visible on the throne. Earlier, while describing about the offerings, festivals and rituals of Konarka Deba with reference to *Madala Panji*, it is stated that, after the temple was complete, Narasingha Deba enhanced the amount of funds budgeted for the offerings made to Konarka Deba and for celebration of the festivals and the rituals of the God with much pomp and ceremony. Considering all these factors together we may safely conclude that the statement, "The temple fell down soon after completion of its construction," is wholly incorrect.

Whatever it is, in spite of all the wrong assumptions made by Arnott, there is at least some truth in his opinion to corroborate the facts described in the legend. One cannot disagree with his opinion that the temple broke down because of less weight placed at the top of the temple. This statement will be discussed later in detail.

1. Bishan Swarup – Konark – P. 95

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COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA



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DIFFERENT PORTIONS OF THE BADA OF MUKHASHALA BEFORE RESTORATION IN 1890

Sterling, investigating the reason for the fall of the temple, assumes that the temple fell because of earthquake or striking of lightning and then, later being affected by rain, storm and other natural disasters, it was completely ruined.[1] Apart from it, as the local people removed and took away the iron clamps holding the stone blocks together, the individual stone blocks went lose and got separated from each other. Sterling further states, "The officers of the Marahatta government actually let down a part of the walls, to procure materials for building some insignificant temples at Puri."[2]

Sterling's opinion is even more improper than the opinion expressed by Arnott. Had the main temple of Konarka been ruined by an earthquake, as both the *Mukhashala* and the main temple were built on a common platform, the *Mukhashala* would also have been ruined at the time. Again, the effect of earthquake of such high scale would not have been confined to the Konarka temple complex only. It would have definitely affected the areas like Puri and Bhubaneswar. The temples of Puri and Bhubaneswar were not built like the temple of Konarka, with such huge blocks of stone making the temple so strong. The earthquake supposed to have ruined the temple of Konarka would have also first ruined the temples at Bhubaneswar and Puri.

The temple of Konarka would not have fallen unless the earthquake assumed to have occurred was of very high magnitude. With an earthquake of such high magnitude, almost all the buildings and structures of Odisha would have been destroyed. Hence, occurrence of a natural disaster of such high magnitude in the state, no matter how old the event was, must have been remembered by the people till date. For the people, who so clearly remember the invasion of Kalapahada till date, where the winning of the war at Kanchi by King Purushottama Deba is known to every house in the kingdom and the story about Shibei Santara is still doing rounds in the mouth of the people, it is not possible for them to forget the natural disaster caused by such an extensive and frightening earthquake of so high magnitude. On the other hand, the people have kept alive a legend describing the cause of the fall of the temple till date and still believe in it. Hence, it is not appropriate to think that the temple fell down due to an earthquake. Dr. J. Fergusson had seen a portion of the temple wall surviving to a height of 120 feet. Had the temple been destroyed due to earthquake, the wall would not have been standing so high for so long. Again, there is no reason for an earthquake of so high magnitude to occur in this region of coastal Odisha.

1. Andrew Sterling – Orissa – The Baptist Mission – Edition 1846 – P. 130
2. Andrew Sterling – Orissa – The Baptist Mission – Edition 1846 – P. 130

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COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

THE ELEPHANT STATUES BEFORE RESTORATION IN 1890

In the history of India, there have been mentions of many famines occurring in the region, but not even a single mention of earthquake, even of moderate magnitude, that occurred here.

Hence, it cannot be believed that, destruction of the temple of Konarka was due to a severe earthquake sweeping the coastal Odisha.

As the walls of the temple of Konarka are 20 to 25 feet thick, lightning has a lesser chance to break apart the temple than that of an earthquake. It is not practically possible for lightning to crack so thick walls of the temple. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra says that it is absolutely impossible for lightning to break apart the temple of Konarka. Specially, as per Fergusson, it is not possible for lightning to strike the main temple sparing the iron topped *Mukhashala* standing nearby. Therefore it is to be agreed that, had the main temple been broken apart by lightning, the *Mukhashala* would not have survived the disaster. Again, it is impossible for lightning to cause so severe damages to the main temple and the temple of *Ramachandi* sparing the *Mukhashala* only. To save the temples from damages caused by lightning, all the temples of Odisha carry a metal Wheel *(Nilachakra)* or a Trident *(Trishula)* at the top of the temple and no temple has yet been damaged by lightning. After the fall of the main and the other temples of Konarka, only the *Mukhashala* was standing there with its original shape and since, there was no *Kalasha* or *Chakra* at its top it was being struck by lightning repeatedly. As Bishan Swarup writes, "Within a span of 10 years from the year 1900, the *Mukhashala* was struck by lightning twice."[1] Such repeated striking of lightning could not do any damage to the *Mukhashala* even though it was on the verge of collapse. Hence, the main temple of Konarka, which was newly built with so strong a structure, could not have fallen by striking of lightning. Therefore, Sterling's assumption –

1. BishanSwarup – Konark – P. 100

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COURTESY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

ONE OF THE TWO GAJA-SINGHA STATUES BEFORE RESTORATION IN 1890

'Konarka fell down because of the striking of lightning or occurrence of a severe earthquake is imaginary and baseless. The real reason for the fall of the temple needs to be searched for somewhere else.

Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra, Dr. J. Fergusson and Dr. Hunter, etc. assume that the temple of Konarka fell because of a defective foundation. Konarka is a sandy place and hence it is quite natural for anybody to think of the possibility of a sinking foundation as the cause of the fall of the temple. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra says that, the foundation of the temple was laid on soft sandy layer of the riverbank. Had it been extended to the hard soil below it, then it would not have sunk; but the foundation of the temple had not gone that deep into the soil. As said earlier, there were four pillars of 40 feet high inside the *Mukhashala* and each was built out of a single stone block. As Dr. Hunter says, these pillars broke down as they started sinking into the ground. Hence, it is assumed that, the foundation could not tolerate the heavy load and started to sink. Therefore, according to Dr. Hunter a defective foundation is the main reason for collapse of the temple. Dr. Hunter further says that the temple of Konarka collapsed before the deity of the Sun God was installed in it and even before the construction of the temple was complete. However, Bishan Swarup says that, it is not possible for such a huge temple like Konarka to fall due to sinking of the foundation. Had it been the case, the entire temple would have sunk along with the foundation.[1] Then, Why did the temple fall? If the foundation would have sunk only on one side then the temple would have fallen and that too, to one side only. As per the description of Arnott, the temple walls actually collapsed inwards at all the sides of it and created a huge and compact heap of stone taking the appearance of a hillock. Konarka is a sandy place and it cannot be assumed that the builders of such a huge and marvellous temple would have given less importance to and concern for the possibility of its foundation to sink in future than the critics and the visitors to Konarka are giving now. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra and others say that, the layer of soil existing below the upper sandy layer at Konarka is quite hard. Bishan Swarup also agrees to it and says that the fine sand layer existing below the top layer of the soil is quite hard and the foundation of Konarka temple definitely had gone that deep. If the foundation had actually

1. Bishan Swarup – Konark – P. 9

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been started from this layer, then it would not have been possible for it to sink. It is also impossible for anybody to imagine that the talented people who surprised the engineers of the present age of science with their high level of technical and engineering skill, long experience, and applied such huge amount of labour and funds in construction of the temple would have constructed it just placing the foundation on the upper soft sandy layer of the soil. If at all it is believed to have had been so, and the sculptors of Konarka did not know how to lay a strong foundation and built the temple on the soft lose layer of sand moving constantly along with the wind, in spite of all the sculptural and architectural skill known to them, in that case also, the foundation would have sunk equally on all sides and not to one side only. In this situation, along with the foundation, both the main temple and the *Mukhashala* would have sunk from all sides and survived the fall. Of course, there was no reason for the foundation to behave in that manner. In the other case, had the foundation sank to one side, then both the main temple and the *Mukhashala* would have collapsed and not the main temple only.

During the visits of Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra and Dr. Hunter the entire foundation and the lower platform were buried under a large heap of stone blocks. Hence, they did not see the foundation and the lower platform as clearly as the visitors of today see it. Now, no signs of a sinking foundation are seen on the plinth or on the platform. Had it sunk, it would have caused many cracks on them and also on the walls of the temple. The sunken side would have appeared lower than the unaffected sides. No such signs are found here. Rather the plinth looks undamaged. Had Dr. Mitra and Dr. Hunter seen the plinth as it is visible today, then they would have also refrained from making such wrong statements about the fall of the temple.

Finding the broken pillars inside the *Mukhashala*, Dr. Hunter assumes that the reason behind the fall of the temple is the sinking foundation. Dr. Hunter says that, as the foundation sank, the pillars got detached from the roof of the *Mukhashala* and broke down. This assumption of his is also as wrong as his earlier assumptions. There was no reason for the pillars to break with sinking of the foundation. The entire structure along with the roof of the *Mukhashala* and the pillars would have sunk with the foundation and remained there in that state and undamaged. Dr. Hunter has mistakenly assumed that the pillars were absolutely necessary to stabilise the huge roof of the *Mukhashala*. It shows his ignorance about the architectural techniques applied to the construction of the temples of Odisha. From the analysis made in the previous chapters about the techniques applied for construction of temples, it is evident that the weight of the *Amalaka Shila* and the *Kalasha* are enough to support and balance the load of the gradually inclining walls of the temple. Rather, had the pillars been built to support the roof, it would have collapsed soon. During the rescue operation of Konarka many proposals to maintain the undamaged condition and safety of the *Mukhashala* were put forward by different experts. One of these proposals was to support its roof by constructing a huge pillar. However, this proposal was rejected as per the advice of C. A. Merchant, the Assistant Engineer of the workshop in Cuttack and the then Chief Engineer R. G. Kemedy, as it would have been more harmful for the safety of the *Mukhashala*. With the help of a model C. A. Merchant demonstrated that, supporting the roof with a pillar would make the downward pressure exerted by *Kalasha*, etc. ineffective and hence the roof would tend to collapse. R. G. Kemedy also proved the same thing with the help of the theories of mechanics.[1] Hence, it cannot be assumed that the pillars inside the *Mukhashala* were constructed to support its roof. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra says that there was another ceiling below the main roof like a false ceiling which was supported by these pillars along with iron beams placed underneath this ceiling and on the pillars.

Lastly, Dr. Hunter assumes that, the construction of the temple was never completed and the deity of the Sun God was never installed in the temple. Earlier, while analysing the opinion of Arnott, it has been stated that a throne was constructed inside the main temple and some marks are found on this throne indicating continuance of the worship inside the temple for quite a long time. Hence, Dr. Hunter's assumption regarding incomplete state of the temple is wrong. Bishan Swarup also says, "The temple enjoyed worship for several centuries before it fell down".[2] Towards the end of the 16th Century AD, from the description given by Abul Fazl, it is known that the temple at the time was in unbroken state and the worship of the deity was continuing there. Dr. Bloch says that because of premature death of King Narasingha Deba, the temple of Konarka was never completed. Earlier in Chapter-IX, while analysing the statements made in the copper plate inscriptions of Narasingha Deba-II and in *Madala Panji* it has been proved that construction of the temple of Konarka was completed in the year 1278 ("*Shake Dwadashake Shate*") and Langula Narasingha Deba ruled till the year 1282. It has also been said earlier that, King Narasingha Deba-II, the son of Purushottama Deba, had taken the measurements of the temples at Konarka. In

1. Bishan Swarup – Konark – P. 97
2. Bishan Swarup – Konark – P. 97

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Chapter-X, with reference to *Madala Panji*, the amount of funds budgeted for different gods and goddesses have also been stated. Therefore, the statements like, "The construction of the temple was never completed" and "King Narasingha Deba met with a premature death" are not true. In Chapter -VIII, it is stated that the auxiliary deity of the west-side of the temple of *Ramachandi* was found to have been kept in the *Natya Mandira*. Some say that this deity was intended to be installed and worshipped as the image of *Suryanarayana* in the main temple of Konarka. As the temple collapsed before completion of its construction, the deity was kept in the *Natya Mandira*. It is also said there that, this deity was installed at the west-side wall of the temple of *Ramachandi* and during the rescue operation of this temple in the years 1906-1907, this deity was removed from there and kept in the *Natya Mandira*. Again, the place on the throne where the deity was once installed does not seem to be proper for accommodating this particular image of *Suryanarayana*. The group of critics, who believe that this image was meant to be the presiding deity of the main temple, must have assumed that the worship of the Sun God started or was supposed to start at Konarka with construction of the present temple only. However, the tradition of worshipping the Sun was continuing at Konarka since the ancient days and King Narasingha Deba built the present temple only to replace the previously existing ruined temple of the Sun God built much earlier by Purandara Keshari. Hence, it was unnecessary and also unusual to build a new deity of the Sun God for the new temple constructed by the King. The temple was constructed for the Sun God who was being worshipped there since long. Hence the statement made by different critics, "The image of Sun God was never installed in the temple of Konarka" is wholly wrong. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra states that initially, he believed the deity to have not been installed in the temple and he also explained the matter to Dr. Hunter accordingly. He believed in this statement while writing the first part of his book. Hence, he initially wrote. "The new structure (the present temple), however, fell down before it was consecrated, and was never built."[1] However, later, after analysing the matter in greater detail he changed his opinion. Then he writes, "I was at first indeed to think that the fall took place before the consecration of the temple and communicated the opinion to Dr. Hunter, but after mature consideration, I am forced to a different conclusion. The age of the images of the sun and the moon must date from the time, the place was appropriated to Hindu worship in 5th, 6th or the 7th century, and the Gangetic king Languliya Narasingha built the great temple for their better accommodation. The consecration, therefore, must have taken place immediately after its completion, etc."[2] It is known from Abul Fazl's description of the temple of Konarka that the place maintained its status undamaged as a holy place for about three hundred years, and was abandoned only in the beginning of the 17th Century AD. Therefore, it is impossible for not installing the presiding deity in the temple for so long. Since, Dr. Hunter believed in the earlier wrong statement made by Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra, his assumption regarding the matter was wrong. Dr. Hunter writes in his book, "I am indebted for this explanation to Babu Rajendra Lala Mitra," which clearly confirms the fact that he was absolutely wrong.[3] Similarly, many writers are committing mistakes after mistakes in assuming the reason for the fall of the temple of Konarka. These wrong assumptions though are meaningless in finding the real reason for the fall of the temple, have only satisfied the individual quest of such writers. In fact, the real reason for the fall of the temple can be determined by studying the actual procedure of construction of the temple and the principles of engineering involved in it.

All the important temples of Odisha are *Rekha* type temples. Above the vertical *Bada* portion is built the *Rekha* portion, which is twice the height of the *Bada* and the walls of it are constructed gradually inclining towards inside of the temple with successive increase in its height. The main temple of Konarka was also constructed in this manner. It is said in the previous chapter that, to make this *Rekha* portion stable it is necessary to stabilise the centre of gravity of each stone block along with that of the inclining walls and also that of the entire temple. Again, each wall is stabilised by the friction of the adjacent walls on its both sides. In this way two forces act on each of the walls, one is the gravitational force and the other is the frictional force exerted by the two of its adjacent walls. However, as gravitational force also acts on these two adjacent walls, the frictional force exerted by these two walls is not sufficient under all circumstances to counter the gravitational force in order to make the walls stable. Hence, it is necessary to determine the centre of gravity of the walls and accordingly place a heavy load at the top of the temple to increase the frictional force to balance out the resultant gravitational force for making the walls of the temple stable under all circumstances. In other words, it is necessary to place a heavy block of stone of proper weight at the top of the inclining walls of the temple to make the entire structure stable. Hence it was necessary to put heavy weights like *Amalaka Shila* and *Kalasha*, etc. at its top. If this load is removed or disturbed in any manner from its position at the top, then it is quite natural for the gradually inward-inclining walls to fall towards the inside of the temple. The more the walls are inclined the more is the chance of their fall

1. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra – Antiquities of Orissa – Vol. I – P. 158
2. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra – Antiquities of Orissa – Vol. II – P. 151
3. Dr. William Wilson Hunter – Orissa – Vol. I – P. 289 – Foot Note

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and also sooner the walls would fall. If pillars are constructed to support the walls of the temple along with the *Kalasha* and the *Amalaka Shila*, then as per the demonstration and explanation given by C. A. Merchant and R. G. Kemedy the walls would also fall down as the downward pressure exerted by the *Kalasha* and the *Amalaka Shila*, etc. would be annulled by the support of the pillars.

In the year 1568, during the rule of King Mukunda Deba, the last Hindu ruler of Odisha, Kalapahada invaded the kingdom. As Mukunda Deba died in the war, Kalapahada invaded different temples of Odisha and destroyed them. The tyranny of Kalapahada is still visible in certain temples in the form of many broken images and temples found in Bhubaneswar and Jajpur. His animal instinct was not satisfied with the destruction he caused only in Bhubaneswar and Jajpur. According to *Madala Panji* he also invaded the gigantic and elegant temple of Konarka.[1] Since, Konarka was the most important temple, Kalapahada tried to destroy it completely, but failed. As the arms and ammunition and the explosives of those days were not capable enough to break apart such a structure, it was quite natural for Kalapahada, to fail in demolishing the temple of Konarka having walls of thickness 20 feet to 25 feet and made of such huge blocks of stone. What to talk of the temple of Konarka, even the temple of Buddhagaya, built only with bricks could not be destroyed by the arms and ammunition of that age.[2] In the year 1805, Lord Wellesley repeatedly tried, to be precise, four times to break open the earthen wall at Bharatpur with the arms and ammunition of that time and failed, and finally considering it as impregnable abandoned the idea. Again in the year 1827, during the administration of Lord Amherst, in another attempt to break the wall, 10, 000 pounds (5000 *Seer* or 125 *Maunds*) of explosives were used and finally it could only make a crack on the wall. The British soldiers invaded the Barabati Fort in Cuttack and kept it under seize for 4 to 5 days and tried to break apart its stone wall. However, they failed and remained satisfied only with breaking open one small door.[3]

These are all examples of the capability of the arms and ammunitions of the present developed and civilised age of science. Hence, it can be easily imagined, how it would have been impossible for Kalapahada to break apart the 20 feet to 25 feet thick stonewalls of the temple of Konarka with the explosives of those days.

Kalapahada could not destroy the temple of Konarka in spite of using his entire army and the arms, ammunition and explosives. As stated in the *Madala Panji*, Kalapahada, being unable to destroy the temple, took away its *Kalasha* and *Dhwajapadma*. Kalapahada was interested only for the destruction of the temple. Since it was impossible for him to do so, he destroyed the *Amalaka Shila*. He might or might not have been aware of the scientific relationship between the *Amalaka Shila* and the stability of the temple, but it might have been more probable for him to have done so being lured by the valuables stored under the *Amalaka Shila*. Usually, the temple roofs are sealed with the *Amalaka Shila* after putting in a good amount of precious metals and stones under it. The sealing of the present temple of Satyabadi (Sakshigopal near Puri) is still lingering in the memory of the people. It is heard that, Sri Lakhsmi Narayana Brahmachari himself climbed the temple with a good amount of gold and precious stones and put it at the top of it before the temple roof was sealed with the *Amalaka Shila*. On the 3rd of July in the year1917 the Shaw Hmaw Daw Pagoda located in Pegu in Burma fell due to a severe earthquake. It was found that a diamond valued at 10, 000 Rupees along with gold and precious stones worth of 100, 000 Rupees were stored at the top of the temple under the *Amalaka Shila*[4]. It is not known whether the *Amalaka Shila* was taken away by Kalapahada or not, but it was not there in the year 1628 when King Narasingha Deba-II ordered for a measurement of the temple. All the measurements taken during this period are stated up to the *Amalaka Shila* only and beyond it the actual measurement is not described. It is assumed that, even if Kalapahada could not have carried away the *Amalaka Shila*, he would have damaged it and disturbed its position in such a manner that after his return from the place it fell off the top by itself. Therefore, it was not there in 1628. The temple being devoid of the load at the top, its *Rekha* portion gradually crumbled down. Manomohan Ganguli and Bishan Swarup also believed it as the main cause of the fall of the temple.[5] Again, as the temple was invaded by the Muslims it lost its sacred status and the deity of *Suryanarayana* had to be removed from the temple. Hence, all the offerings, festivals and rituals related to the temple were suspended. Remaining in this abandoned state and without the care and sponsorship received from the King, its walls gradually crumbled and fell towards inside of the temple. However, the *Mukhashala* did not suffer much damage. If the invasion of Kalapahada to Konarka is at all to be believed, then the legend described in the beginning of this chapter indicating the reason for the fall of the temple cannot be discarded completely. There was a *Kumbha* Stone or the *Kalasha* at the top of the main

1. Bishan Swarup – Konark – P. 97
2. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra – Antiquities of Orissa – Vol. II – P. 151
3. Krupasindhu Mishra – "*Barabati Durga*" – Chapter – VII -Odia Book
4. The Statesman – 19-09-1917
5. Manomohan Ganguli – Orissa and Her Remains – P.P. 456 – 457 & Bishan Swarup – Konarka – P.P. 97-98

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temple of Konarka and like the present *Mukhashala* it was also acting as a landmark for the sailors passing by the coast. The third fact stated in the legend is the invasion by the Muslims. Kalapahada and his soldiers were Muslims and how they attacked the temple is stated above. Being unable to break apart the temple, Kalapahada took away the *Kumbha* Stone or the *Kalasha* and losing the top-down balancing force exerted by it, the *Rekha* part of the temple gradually crumbled and fell down. These are the fourth and the fifth facts derived from the legend. Since the temple lost its sanctity due to the entrée of the Muslims into its premises; the priests removed the deity of *Suryanarayana* and kept it hidden from the eyes of the Muslims and all the rituals and the festivals connected with the temple were suspended from that day. Later, in the year 1627-28 AD the son of King Purushottama Deba and grandson of King Ramachandra Deba, King Narasingha Deba-II (ruled during 1622-1646) started on a visit to Konarka coincidentally on the day the Emperor of Delhi handed over the Province of Orissa to Bakher Khan. It was also the 21st day of the month of Mina in the 9th Anka of the King in 1626-1627.[1] During his visit, a measurement of the entire temple of Konarka was taken. The King carried the deity of *Suryanarayana* and his representative images, the Moon and the Sun with him to Puri and installed them in the temple of Indra inside the compound of the temple of *Jagannatha* for resuming the worship. These are the sixth and the seventh facts derived from the legend. Hence, those who discard the legend as completely imaginary and unsuitable for determining the cause of the fall of the temple are only being unreasonable. No false information is conveyed by this legend; the only events considered as imaginary in the proper sense are the theft of the huge stone-magnet from the top of the temple and the invasion of the temple by the Muslim sailors. It has been said in the beginning of this chapter that the *Kumbha* Stone or the *Kalasha* might have been misrepresented as a Stone-Magnet and that Konarka served as a landmark for the sailors sailing by the coast. Hence, when there was such a deep relationship between the temple of Konarka and the nearby sea, it is not unusual for the local people to think the Muslim invaders as the Muslim sailors taking away the *Kalasha* and the ships anchoring nearby as being stopped by the *Kumbha* Stone or the *Kalasha*.

In this way the fall of the main temple was inevitable. Gradually stone blocks from the top of the temple started to fall one after another. The huge size of the stone blocks used for construction of the temple has been described in the previous chapter. By the impact of these huge stone blocks falling from such a great height, that is, from the top of the walls of the temple, it became more and more weak. The huge *Gaja-Singha* stone block was placed above the *Mukhashala* at a height of only 21 feet below the *Amalaka Shila* of the main temple. As described earlier, the weight of this stone block on the wall of the main temple was around 45 Ton. This huge block of stone falling from such a great height must have created vibrations on the ground of the nearby places like that caused by an earthquake. This *Gaja-Singha* stone, while falling down, first landed on the roof of the *Mukhashala* and then rolled down to finally rest on the ground at the north side of the main temple. With its impact, the roof of the *Mukhashala* was damaged at many places; especially the damage at the south and the southwest side was severe. The centre of gravity of the *Pidha* roof of the *Mukhashala* was disturbed by this impact. The strength of the roof of the *Mukhashala*, even in its partially damaged condition, can be well imagined from its survival of the impact of such a huge stone, like the *Gaja-Singha* image, falling from such a great height. In the year 1822, when Sterling visited Konarka, one of the walls of the main temple was standing up to a height of 120 feet. Fergusson had also seen the wall in the same condition in the year 1839 and taken a photograph of it. In the month of October in 1848, that area was swept by a severe rainstorm which made this remaining portion of the wall of the temple to fall to the ground. The earthquake-like impact created by the fall of this wall has not yet been forgotten by the local people. Due to this vibration, the roof and the pillars of the *Mukhashala* sank considerably. Hence, during the period 1860-70, when Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra and Dr. Hunter visited Konarka, it only looked like a huge heap of stone blocks. The pillars inside the *Mukhashala* did not exist and the inner ceiling had already fallen off. All the beams placed over the pillars had also fallen off. As per Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra, at the time of his visit, some of the beams were still hanging there and were on the verge of falling off. The *Pidha* roof of the *Mukhashala* was also on the verge of falling apart.

In the year 1848, it was written in the Baptist Mission Report of Odisha, "The thin and long wall that existed has also fallen to the ground. Now, except the *Mukhashala* no other temple is seen at Konarka. The wall collapsed during the storm in the month of October. The roof of the *Mukhashala* is almost on the verge of falling down and this miraculous structure may not be there for long. Within a short period of time the entire Konarka will be converted to a huge heap of stone debris."

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1. Bishan Swarup assumes the Emperor of Delhi to be Shajahan. Some also do not believe that Shajahan had given the charge of Odisha to Bakher Khan (Dr. William Wilson Hunter – Orissa – Vol. II – Appendix – VIII). According to Madala Panji, Narasingha Deba -II ruled from 1622 to 1646 AD (Bengal District - Gazetteer - Puri– P. 47). Manomohan Chakravarty places him in the period from 1622 to 1646 AD. Since on the 9th Anka of Narasingha Deba-II, 5 to 6 years had already passed from the time he visited Konarka, the time of his visit is to be determined from this fact just stated above, that is, he visited Konarka 5 to 6 years before he reached his 9th Anka.

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Sterling describes that since the temple was abandoned and no maintenance work was executed for a long time, the individual stone blocks of the temple were separated from each other by the growth of moss and small plants on it and also by the harsh effect of the weather. Again, the local people removed and took away the iron clamps used in the temple to hold the stone blocks together. As a result, it caused the stone blocks to fall off the body of the temple. To add to it, as Sterling mentions, "The officers of the Marahatta government actually let down a part of the walls, to procure materials for building some insignificant temples at Puri."

This way the Great Fall of the main temple of Konarka was complete. The *Mukhashala* was also on the verge of falling down. Its south side doorway was completely broken. The sculptural work only on the eastside and the north side door frames are seen today. However, in 1860 the *Nabagraha* Panel of the eastside entrance had fallen down on the plinth as the beam supporting it fell off due to yielding of the pillars supporting it. In 1868, when Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra visited Konarka, the *Nabagraha* Panel had already been removed and kept outside the compound of the temple for transporting it to Calcutta. All over the *Mukhashala* many plants and creepers had grown and made the structure very weak. Due to the impact of the falling stone blocks and the iron beams from the broken main temple, the plinth was damaged at many places and was completely covered with debris. The *Natya Mandira* was in almost undamaged condition. Kalapahada missed to look at it with his destructive eyes. The *Marahattas* dismantled and carried the *Natya Mandira* of Konarka to Puri in undamaged condition and rebuilt it there as the *Bhoga Mandapa* (Site of Offerings) of the temple of *Jagannatha*.

Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra says,"The building originally formed a part of the Temple of the Sun at Konaraka, and thence was bodily transferred to this place (to Puri) by the *Marahattas* in the middle of the last century (18th Century). The transfer was effected with great care and skill, and in the adjustment of its different parts no trace is visible of the structure having been erected, then dismantled, and again set up. Looking to the vast mass of sculptured ornaments never intended to be moved about, and carved in *situ*, the task was of extreme difficulty, but it was most successfully executed. The extensive carvings done on the *Natya Mandira* has already been described earlier. It would have never been imagined by its builders that the entire temple built by them at Konarka would someday be transported to another place. Considering the amount of decorative carvings contained in it, it had been a very difficult task to transport, block by block, the entire temple without causing any damage to it. Even then, it was carried out in such a manner that it did not seem to have caused any damage to the temple."[1] However, Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra has not mentioned which document he referred to for making the above-mentioned statement. He only heard about it from the peoples' mouth that, the *Marahattas* dismantled the entire *Natya Mandira* of Konarka, transported it to Puri and reassembled it there as *Bhoga Mandapa* of the *Jagannatha* temple. It seems as impossible as it is astonishing to find critics like Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra believing in such rumours. However, after the rescue operation of the *Natya Mandira* was completed, it was seen that except the roof, the *Bada*, etc. of this temple still existed there in its original condition. As said earlier, the *Garbhamudra* of the *Natya Mandira* is still lying on the ground at its west side and also one side of its roof existed there for some time. In this situation, the statement, "the entire *Natya Mandira* was transported to Puri," cannot be accepted as true. It might be possible that some stone blocks from the *Pidha* roof of the *Natya Mandira* were transported to Puri for building the *Bhoga Mandapa*. Hence, it is assumed that, the *Natya Mandira* was in undamaged condition during the rule of the *Marahattas* and since the temple of Konarka had already fallen down, the *Marahattas*, considering the *Natya Mandira* to be useless there, broke down its roof and carried some stone blocks to construct the *Bhoga Mandapa* at Puri. During the time Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra visited the *Natya Mandira*, it was under the debris of stone covered with dense foliage.

The temple of *Ramachandi* was also ruined along with the main temple of Konarka. The legend described in the chapters II and VII clearly indicate that Kalapahada had invaded the temple of *Ramachandi*. The temple of *Ramachandi* was of equal status to that of the temple of Konarka in terms of sculptural work and elegance. Hence, it might have been possible for Kalapahada, being unable to destroy the temple of Konarka, to satisfy his demonic wish and take revenge, to have destroyed the temple of *Ramachandi*. After destruction of the temple, *Ramachandi* was reinstalled at the mouth of the River Liyakhia. There is no mention of this temple in the descriptions given by Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra or his previous writers, as nobody had ever thought of another temple existing so close to the main temple of Konarka. All the stone blocks of the ruined main temple and those of the temple of *Ramachandi* together appeared then as a single heap of stone. After the rescue operation of Konarka was completed, the existence of this temple from under the debris was brought to light.

1. Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra-Antiquities of Orissa -Vol. II -P. 120 & P.150

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The Aruna Stambha or the Aruna Pillar installed at Konarka was transported by the *Marahattas* and installed in front of the Lions Gate (the main entrance) of the temple in Puri. Again, some of the flat dome shaped stone blocks used in construction of the top layer of the compound wall of Konarka temple were also transported by the *Marahattas* to Puri to be used in construction of a part of the compound wall of Puri temple. This way, The Great Fall of Konarka came to an end. The favourite institution of the Hindu gods and goddesses, in the 17th Century AD became the den of the pirates of far-off countries like Portugal providing them with a shelter to take rest after carrying out their sinful activities in the Bay of Bengal. It is heard from the peoples' mouth that the pirates, for operation at the coast of Puri used the temple of Konarka as their main den. Later, instead of the human beings with animal instinct, Konarka became the dwelling place of the wild animals. During the visit of Dr. Hunter, bears, wolves, monkeys, snakes, falcons, etc., hiding behind the trees and the rocks, were creating fear in the mind of the people passing by it. No body dared to go near the temple. The patience of a few people, who put up a brave front to visit the place, was always put to test by the cry of the scary falcons, scream of the teeth biting monkeys and the rowdy call of the wild animals living there. This way, the once crowded, sacred and fearless ancient zone of Konarka was reconverted to a fearful deep forest full of wild animals. The existence the holy Konarka came to an end. All the sanctity and significance of Konarka described in the epics do not exist at the place any more. The holy water of River Chitrotpala is no longer flowing in to the vast sea to be hugged by it with love and affection. That sacred flow of water is no longer seen there excepting only its symbolic existence in the form of a tiny pool. Whatever is there now, how long can it remain? All the historical and mythological wealth of Konarka has already gone down along with the setting Sun God of Konarka. The holy land, the place of worship for many gods and goddesses in the past, whose feet were once being washed with the strong current of a huge river, has now been converted to an abandoned desert. Konarka, the proud insignia of the Odias, has disappeared for all time to come. Along with Konarka Deba vanished so much effort and dedication, so much hard work and practice, so much deep thinking and meditation, spanning over many ages and applied in making of this spectacular monument. The wonderful and imaginative minds of the Odia sculptors and their soft hearts and benevolence reflected through the sculptural wonders of Konarka created by them are no longer imparting that pure feeling of joy in the minds of the visitors to the place. In the past, whatever the sculptors were able to show on a simple piece of stone and the way they used the huge size stone blocks and handled them so easily and what was just a thing of play for them in the real world, now to the Odias, the same acts seem to be untrue and imaginary. After some days, the Odias even may not believe that these wonderful creations of the past were created by their ancestors and eventually are objects which add to their own pride. Today some so-called writers do not like even to identify Konarka to have been created by the Odias.[1]

All the wealth of the Odias has been lost and the name of another major holy place of the entire Hindu world is gradually passing into oblivion. The favourite place of the Hindu gods and goddesses became a befitting place for preaching of Christianity by the missionaries. Due to the ill fate of Konarka the missionaries got a chance to propagate the defects in the Hindu religion citing it as an example.[2] Finally, so was the fate of Konarka. The builders of Konarka must have been observing its fate from the heaven and I just wonder, what would have they been thinking about it now!!!



THE NABAGRAHA PANEL ONCE INSTALLED ABOVE THE SOUTH-SIDE ENTRANCE OF MUKHASHALA

Now it is installed above the main entrance (South-side) of Gundicha Temple in Puri. It was carried away from Konarka after its collapse and was installed here by Baba Brahmachari, a Guru of the Marahattas. - Alica Boner and Sadasiva Rath Sharma – New Light on the Sun Temple of Konarka – Acknowledgements – Page iii

1. Nagendranath Basu writing about Konarka in Bishwakosha has stated Konarka as the show of skill of the Bengali sculptors.

2. "The temple however served me for a very different purpose to that for which it was originally intended; for, as there were many people inside looking about our conversation led me to discourse at some length on the universal destruction of idolatry, and the spread of the glorious soul-resorting gospel of the Son of God x x x I was afterwards struck at the idea of making a preaching house of an idol's temple." – Rev. A. Sutton – Andrew Sterling – Orissa – Baptist Mission Edition – P. 135

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DAMAGED SCULPTURAL ARTICLES CLEARED OFF THE TEMPLE CAMPUS
NOW LYING OUTSIDE THE COMPOUND

As said by Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra some of the sculptural ruins of huge size had to be unfortunately blasted off into pieces for their easy removal from the campus.



SOME OTHER DAMAGED SCULPTURAL ARTICLES CLEARED OFF THE TEMPLE CAMPUS
NOW LYING OUTSIDE THE COMPOUND

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SURYA (THE SUN)
It was found lying in the Natya Mandira during the rescue operation

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CHAPTER XV

THE RESCUE OPERATION

As stated in the previous chapter, Konarka, instead of remaining as the abode of the gods and the goddesses gradually transformed itself to a dwelling place for the wild animals. From a distance, Konarka looked like a hillock covered with a dense forest. As per the local people, even during the day, nobody dared to come near it. Though the *Mukhashala* was not as damaged as the main temple and the other temples in its compound, it was on the verge of falling down. The damage to the *Mukhashala* was caused by the impact of stone blocks slipping off and falling from the ruined main temple. Additionally, it was becoming weaker day by day due to the harm caused by the sultry atmosphere. Due to the growth of fungi, small plants and trees on its *Bada* and roof, the constituent stone blocks were separated from each other creating gaps between them and then occasionally falling down from the top. Hence, though the fall of all the temples in Konarka was completed by the year 1860, the *Mukhashala* was surviving at the time. However, the way it was gradually deteriorating, had it been kept that way, the *Mukhashala* now standing as the only silent witness of Konarka would not have existed till date. It is only due to the favour shown by the government by its rescue action that the *Mukhashala* is now surviving, though in its semi-ruined state. The rescue operation of the most valuable wealth in the field of sculptural art and temple architecture of Odisha or rather that of India, that is, Konarka, is described below with reference to the description given in detail by Bishan Swarup in his book.[1] Initially, the proposal for rescuing the Konarka temple complex was rejected as it seemed to be a very expensive and impossible affair, the reason being, it was built with stone blocks of huge size which created unmanageable heaps of stone after the temple fell to the ground and it had already transformed itself as a shelter for many wild animals, lizards, birds and several kinds of snakes. Hence, to keep a memento of Konarka for exhibiting it to the people, first a proposal was made to carry the *Nabagraha* Panel, once installed on the east-side doorway of the *Mukhashala*, to the museum in Calcutta. However, as said earlier, with the funds provided by the government, the *Nabagraha* Panel could only be moved by a few feet and was abandoned at the south-east corner outside the compound of Konarka temple. In 1881, Lt. Governor Sir S. C. Belly proposed a rescue mission for Konarka with some limited funds which did not seem practical from the beginning and finally happened so in reality. As said earlier, two huge *Gaja-Singha* images at the east-side entrance, two huge stallions at the south entrance and two huge elephants at the north entrance of the *Mukhashala* were installed as the guards at the doorways. Since stone blocks were falling down from the top of the ruined main temple and the damaged *Mukhashala*, as per Belly's mission, only these statues, except the *Gaja-Singha*, were transferred and installed on two newly built platforms at the north and south side of the *Mukhashala* to prevent them from sustaining further damages from the impact of the falling stone blocks. The two *Gaja-Singha* images were installed on the heap of stone covering the ruins of the *Natya Mandira* mistakenly assuming it to be a naturally elevated rocky spot.

In the year 1892, the authorities of the Museum of India, being inspired by Konarka, proposed again to start a rescue operation there. However, again the proposal was abandoned considering it to be very expensive. Hence, effort was made again to carry the *Nabagraha* Panel to Calcutta. It was sliced in to two parts lengthwise to make its transportation a little easier. However, due to its heavy weight and dearth of funds the project was again abandoned. The larger of its two pieces is still lying at the corner outside the compound wall and is gradually going underneath the sand. With time, it will also vanish with the setting pride of Konarka and transform itself to a legend to remain only in the memory of the people.

After a few years, perhaps due to the good luck of Odisha, Sir John Woodburn was appointed as the Lt. Governor. Very few benevolent administrators like him are seen in the history of this country. The Odias are specially obliged to him for his strong belief in the glorious past of the State. Woodburn is still alive in the hearts and minds of the people for his far sight and the rescue operations conducted by him for restoration of various temples in Bhubaneswar. Because of his effort, the proposal for rescue operation of Konarka was again initiated and in fact the work on it also started during his administration. Such a benevolent person would never have allowed

1. Bishan Swarup – Konark – Chapter XIV

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carrying away the *Nabagraha* Panel to Calcutta. As expected of him, he rather ordered to place the *Nabagraha* Panel at the front of the eastern doorway as it was originally placed. He could not tolerate this invaluable piece of sculpture to be lying in the open exposed to the rain and sun. However, it was considered unsafe to reinstall the *Nabagraha* Panel on the eastside doorway without first carrying out some repair work, as along with the *Mukhashala*, it had become very weak and did not have the capacity to carry the heavy load. Hence, in spite of all the efforts by Woodburn, the *Nabagraha* Panel remained lying as it was before, near the sea beach.

In the meantime, in the year 1901, the rescue work at Konarka was started by removing the stone blocks, sand and debris from and around the temple premises. In *Satya Yuga*, like the gods and the demons found many precious objects while churning the sea, a number of beautiful images were recovered one after another from under the sand and the stone debris during this rescue operation. As the heaps of sand and stone were cleared more and more, gradually the seven horses of the Sun God emerged from the sand and then the wheels at the base, exposing this architectural splendour built like the horse-drawn chariot of the Sun God.

The plinth and the wheels of the temple were buried under the debris for about three centuries. The east-side of the north and the south staircases were cleared to the bottom of the lower platform. The *Natya Mandira* was also dug out of the debris; but its roof was not there. Hence, Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra's assumption based on the legend cited by the local people that, the entire *Natya Mandira* was transported to Puri in its original condition by the Marahattas, was not right. The place where the two *Gaja-Singha* images were reinstalled, thinking it to be a naturally formed rock, was actually the *Natya Mandira* buried under the stone debris and this fact was discovered during its rescue operation only. However, the operation had to be stopped for the time being as it was presumed that, these two images might be damaged during excavation of the *Natya Mandira*.

In the meantime, a proposal was raised to rescue the *Mukhashala*. As said earlier, the *Mukhashala* was ruined at many places. Especially it's *Bada* at the south doorway and some portions of the plinth were broken. Though the east-side and the north-side doorways were not much damaged, it was expected to deteriorate soon to a degree even more than that of the south side doorway. Every now and then the stone blocks were dropping down from its roof. During this period, the *Bada* was damaged in such a manner that, the load of the roof, instead of falling evenly on the entire *Bada*, was rather falling on specific stone blocks crushing them one after another. In fact, the *Mukhashala* was in such a damaged condition that, had it been left in that condition, it would have fallen down completely by now and that would have served as the closing of the final chapter of the Fall of Konarka.

Hence, the rescue and the conservation of the *Mukhashala* were considered to be given the top priority. For the job, it was first proposed to fill up its interior with stone blocks up to a height of 40 feet and on the top of it, at the centre construct a strong pillar up to the *Beki* (Neck) to support the roof. It was initially assumed that by constructing the pillar, the heavy load of the *Amalaka Shila*, etc. falling on the roof would be supported by the pillar and the roof would be safe. However, as determined by the engineers of the workshop at Cuttack that the downward load exerted by the heavy *Amalaka Shila*, etc., would be annulled by the support of the pillar and the roof would eventually fall down. Hence, the idea was abandoned as it would have made the roof more vulnerable to fall than to make it safe. Lastly, as there was no other suitable alternative, it was decided to fill up the interior of the *Mukhashala* with sand. Closing all the doorways and filling the inside of the *Mukhashala* with sand would have made its already damaged *Bada* more vulnerable to a fall as it would not have been able to bear the lateral force exerted by the sand mass filled inside the *Mukhashala* in addition to the load of the roof. Therefore, to assist the *Bada* to handle this pressure, another wall of 15 feet thick was built inside the temple on all sides in close proximity to the *Bada*. Since the south and the west side roofs were more damaged, the restoration work was first started with these two sides and in spite of it being a difficult job, it was safely executed. First, the south and the east side entrances were closed and since, the north side entrance was in a better condition, the sand filling and construction of the secondary wall inside the temple was conducted through this doorway. At the north side entrance a passage was kept through the newly built secondary wall. Since all the doors except the north side doorway were closed, the inside of the temple was very dark and even in the daytime the work was done with lights switched on.

As the inside secondary wall was completed up to the top level of the *Bada*, sand was filled up through this doorway up to the height that was possible through it. Then the north side door was sealed. A hole was required to be made on the *Pidha* roof for further filling of sand. However, as said earlier, the *Gaja-Singha* image falling on the roof of the *Mukhashala* had already broken a piece at the west side of the *Pidha* roof. Sand was again filled

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through this hole. As this gap was so small and was created due to a damaging impact on the roof, every now and then, stone block were falling down from here. Through this gap sand baskets were carried to the inside of the temple. Once Bishan Swarup went inside this temple through this gap and while coming out of it a huge block of stone fell down. Luckily, Bishan Swarup's life was saved. Hence, before the work was started through this gap, for safety of the workers, a protective arch was constructed inside the temple. After filling sand up to the possible level, this gap was also closed and a hole, 3 inches in diameter, was made at the head of the roof. The depth of the hole was 25 feet. Sand was again filled through this hole with the help of a long funnel. Initially, there were two holes of 1 foot in width and 1 foot in length already present on the roof perhaps for circulation of air. While the filling was going on through the hole on the head of the roof, the sand inside the temple was being spread evenly with the help of bamboo poles inserted through these two previously existing holes.

Apart from the filling of sand and construction of the secondary wall inside the temple, certain measures were also taken on the outside to make the *Bada* and the roof strong. On the south side the doorway was sealed with a strong wall. Of course, now it looks very odd. However, the beauty of this side had to be sacrificed for preservation of the beauty of other major portions of the temple. This way, in the beginning part of the year 1905, after taking up repair and restoration work at different portions of it, the preservation work of the *Mukhashala* was completed. Even with a quick glance at the *Mukhashala*, the difference between the original work and the restoration work is easily perceived. Now the *Mukhashala* that was on the verge of falling down is expected to become stable at least for some more time.

It was said earlier that the two *Gaja-Singha* images originally placed at the eastside entrance of the *Mukhashala* were removed and placed by mistake on the heap of rock debris covering the *Natya Mandira*. The rescue activity of the *Natya Mandira* was suspended at the time apprehending possible damage to the images caused by such action. However, in the year 1903, these two *Gaja-Singha* images were removed from there and reinstalled on two low platforms at both sides of the stairs located at the eastside of the *Natya Mandira*, and then the rescue mission of the *Natya Mandira* was started. These two images are still there now. As the sand and the stone blocks were removed from the *Natya Mandira*, its beautifully carved pillars, walls and the plinth were exposed. Inside the *Natya Mandira* an image of the Sun God (Chapter-VIII) was kept at the bottom of a pillar. The rescue mission was completed by 1905.

In the year 1906, clearing of the heap of stone and sand debris on the west-side of the *Mukhashala* or that of the main temple was started. As there was a possibility of damaging the fine carvings like creeper motifs on the surviving part of the main temple and the other images placed thereon, much care had to be taken in removing the huge size stone blocks from there. As more and more debris were cleared, gradually the three auxiliary deities of the main temple appeared. Whatever damage was done to them was repaired. As all the auxiliary temples once housing these images had already been completely damaged (Chapter-V), stonewalls were constructed at both sides and above each of these images. Though the images are protected against any further damage, yet they are deteriorating day by day by the corrosive effect of the weather.

In this rescue process the *Bada* of the main temple and some portions of the plinth were exposed and on clearing the inside of the ruined main temple an elegant throne made of black granite was found there (Chapter-V). Since, the entrance to the main temple from the *Mukhashala* was sealed and there was no other way to enter it, a staircase was built on the outside, by the side of its *Bada*, leading to the inside of the temple. The wall that was constructed to seal the entrance to the main temple through the *Mukhashala* was of the same thickness as that of the main wall and also a *Bandhana* was built on it to make the sealed entrance look as the original wall.

The clamps used in the construction of the throne were all missing and probably these were made of brass and not of iron as in usual cases. It is heard that during the rescue operation, the throne was dismantled and then reassembled with a few pieces of new stone blocks to replace the broken ones.

During this period the *Jangha* of the eastern door of the *Mukhashala* was reconstructed to replace the broken one and also some stonework was carried out at its western side. After the main temple was completely cleared of the debris, it was fully exposed down to the level of its lower platform bringing out its beautiful plinth. The sand and stone debris had to be carried to quite a distance from the temple to fully expose this plinth and the lower platform.

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After the rescue mission of the main temple was complete, a small heap of stone was found at its south-west corner. It never occurred to anybody that the heap of stone could be the ruins of a temple. Hence, none of the old time writers like, Dr. Hunter and Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra have mentioned it. Since this heap of stone looked different from a naturally formed one, the digging of it was carried out just for the sake of curiosity. However, while clearing the debris from there, the ruins of a temple beautifully decorated with ornamental carvings were brought to light. This was the temple of Ramachandi (as per Bishan Swarup, it was the temple of Mayadevi- Chapter-VII). At the time, Bishan Swarup wrote his book on Konarka, the temple was already fully exposed excepting some portions of the plinth. Now, the temple with the plinth completely exposed looks very elegant and it is no way less in comparison to the main temple of Konarka with respect to architectural and sculptural excellence.

Likewise, one after another, all the temples of Konarka were brought to light. It was decided not to keep all the debris inside the compound. Though it was a difficult job to carry away such huge size stone blocks lying there and all the sand and stone dug out of the compound, they were carried outside of the compound. Leave aside the human force; it was even difficult to move them with machines of this age, the age of the modern science! So, it was necessary to break these stone blocks in to pieces with explosives just to move them out of the compound with ease. Was it that, at the time of construction of the temple of Konarka, these huge stone blocks were lighter so that they could be easily transported, and now, after being exposed to the rain and sun for six to seven hundred years have become heavy! The rescue workers would have thanked the sculptors of Konarka had they used the bricks of the size presently available and not such huge size stone blocks in construction, as then they would not have had to apply so much skill and labour to execute the job of just moving them to outside of the compound! Anyway, all the stone blocks were cleared from inside of the compound of Konarka only after breaking them apart. However, one feels really sad about it. Had the huge blocks of stone been kept nearby with their original shape and size then, looking at them, the visitor would have been receiving some consolation and getting a little more idea about the structure they originally belonged to. Now only the *Gaja-Singha* image is lying inside the compound at the north side of the main temple. At the south side of the main temple a comparatively smaller image of a lion is also seen lying on the ground. Perhaps it was one of the images placed at the *Beki* (Neck) of the temple to keep the *Amalaka Shila* stable (Page 161). Perhaps the other such images were broken in to pieces except this one.

After the compound was cleared, to avoid it to be buried under the sand again in future, many trees like, casuarina and *Poonang*, etc. were planted around the complex which has greatly reduced the sand blowing with the wind in to the compound.

Noting some shortfalls in the preservation work, Bishan Swarup has proposed certain additional measures to be taken for better preservation of the temple complex at Konarka.

He writes[1],"Some work still remains to be done and have either, been sanctioned or proposed. The broken walls of the temple and the *Natamandir* have to be preserved by terracing over their top, so as not to allow water to enter. The Jagamohana requires some more patchwork of masonry to strengthening some of the projecting stone blocks. A lightning arrester is to be installed at its top as within the last ten years the temple was twice struck by lightning. Clearing a little more sand all around the minor temples will perhaps be required to open out the whole plinth. A shed is also urgently required to keep the fine sculpture and statues that have been picked up from the debris. His Honour the Lieutenant Governor has sanctioned the replacing of the *Nabagraha* Stone in its original position. The work is only waiting for funds."

Out of all the preservation work suggested above, some have been already carried out. The upper portions of the damaged walls of the main temple, the *Natya Mandira* and the temple of Ramachandi have been treated with a thick lime paste for protection against rainwater. The repair work of the *Mukhashala* with some stone masonry has already been completed. Last year (1915), during my visit to Konarka in the month of March, a lightning arrester was being installed at the top of the *Mukhashala*. The metal strips connected to it were run down to be buried in the well located at the north side and the other in a deep hole at the south side. The sand and stone debris from all around the small temples inside the compound have been removed exposing some

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1. Bishan Swarup – Konark – P. 103

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more platforms there. A house is built at the north-east corner of the compound to store the beautiful images salvaged from the place and all the images are now kept there in safe condition. The key of this house is kept with the caretaker. Out of all the suggestions, the one that has not yet been carried out is that the *Nabagraha* Panel could not yet be placed at its original position. It has already been cut into two pieces and was being dragged here and there at different times. Now, the *Nabagraha* Panel has been kept with care in the new building and the *Grahas* (Planet Gods) are being worshipped everyday by the local priests. As said earlier, apart from the above-mentioned facts, concerning the requirements at Konarka, it is necessary to build roofs over the horses and the elephants located on the south and the north sides of the *Mukhashala.* Otherwise, there is a possibility of these statues to be completely damaged within a short period of time. Some iron beams of the temple lying in the open inside the compound of Konarka are also being slowly corroded due to constant exposure to the sun and the rain. It is necessary to apply a coat of paint to these iron beams and keep them inside the new building or under a separate roof to prevent their further deterioration. These iron beams are wonderful products even in comparison to the present-day products of this category showing the level of skill in engineering, and capability of the steel plants of the ancient Odias. The safekeeping of these iron beams is quite essential. Apart from all this, a major requirement is a good black top road or a railroad from Puri to Konarka facilitating easy movement of people and transportation of goods between these two places. Many people are missing the beauty of Konarka as they are not able to visit the place because of inadequate communication and transportation facilities either by road or by railroad existing here. The expenditure incurred for the restoration work done at Konarka till the time of Bishan Swarup, excluding the salary of the employees, was 96, 000 Rupees. Some more restoration work has also been carried out after this period. Hence, it is estimated that more than Rupees One lakh was spent by the government for restoration of Konarka temple. Not only the Odias, but also the entire Indian community is indebted to the government for incurring such huge expenditure for the purpose for saving the temple of Konarka, the expression of the highest skill of Odisha or rather that of India in the field of sculptural art. Because of their far sight, the last ray of the setting sun of our pride is still shinning, though not so brightly.

Of course, the expenses incurred are not enough to save such a huge monument like Konarka from the path of its destruction. When around Rupees 30 crores (300 million Rupees) were spent in building the temple complex some six centuries ago, what restoration could be done to it now with Rupees one lakh only and when it is in such a badly ruined condition? In this materialistic world of the present time, it is quite impossible even to imagine restoring Konarka to its original condition and presenting it to the world again with its majestic and gigantic appearance of the past. Many wise men of the modern world criticise and ask, "Why invest so much money and labour only to join some blocks of stone?" It is not surprising for such questions to be asked, in an age when money and wealth are the only objects desired and no other higher desires are present in the soul of mankind excepting the passion for pleasure-yielding goods. Many are building houses these days, building first floor over the ground floor, second floor above the first floor and floor above the floor for their own materialistic use. However, at core of his heart, man always desires spiritual peace consciously or sub-consciously. This line of thought also works sub-consciously in the mind of the people while even building houses. This is suggestive of man's quest for what abides forever. In the ancient age, not only in India, but also in other civilised ancient countries like Egypt and Babylon, man was not so eager to acquire individual material prosperity. People were living in small huts or even under the trees. Personal wealth and personal lifestyle were considered very unimportant in comparison to the indestructible national strength present there since time immemorial. Therefore, they were constantly more active to keep the feeling of nationality and hope of the nation alive for all time to come. Lives like those of *Vyasha* and *Balmiki* are no longer seen. There is hardly any reference to these lives in the vast Sanskrit literature. This is not unusual for they gave importance, not to their own lives, but to what was important for the nation, for all humanity. Today, in spite of all the disasters that have happened, whatever trace of the culture of the Aryans of India are seen, are found in literature, art and sculpture of the nation. In sculpture, the creator loses his own identity, making it only an expression of the time, the state and the ambitions of the contemporary society. Engineer Shibei Shantara or the twelve hundred sculptors engaged in building the temple of Konarka do not exist now, and today, it is not known, if they survive by their heirs or not. The King Narasingha Deba is no more and the thousands of people who dedicated their time and worked with their mind and soul to construct the temple of Konarka are also not present now. There exist only the ruins of the huge temple of Konarka, standing quietly at a desolate shore of the sea, as an immortal monument of the Odias. Thousands of Rupees are being spent to save the individuals from death, and it is right to do so. It is also right that necessary funds should be available to preserve a nation's art and sculpture. It is however useless to try to convince people interested in their own material wellbeing the need for investment in a nation's art and sculpture.

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Sculptural art is an expression of a nation's soul. Today, the temples of Odisha, especially the temple of Konarka, illumine our hearts with the light of ideals our-ancestors lived by and generate a pride in our tradition. In fact, if we focus our attention on these mossy stone blocks of Konarka with our eyes wide open and ears alerted, they will not seem to us only as dumb and dead blocks of stone. Rather, from these blocks of stone, we will hear the heart-touching voice of our ancestors, in their effort to console us, eternally whispering into our ears, "Do not ever lose hope." When the people of Odisha will listen to this heart touching voice of their ancestors and then make the world listen to them?



THE RUINED MAIN TEMPLE OF KONARKA

The ruined Main Temple is seen in the foreground and the Mukhashala in the background standing on a 16 ½ feet high common plinth and platform. The restoration process is still continuing.

It is a heart-breaking sight to observe Konarka being rebuilt with plain and polished stone blocks.

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APPENDIX - I

SHLOKAS, VERSES AND HYMNS

Sl. No. 01

मैत्रेयतपसार्ज्जितं

Sl. No. 02

एकोसौ वहुधाभूत्वा कालभेदादनिन्दित : ।
मासे मासे तु पतति एकोद्वादशतां व्रजेत् ॥
मित्रो मार्गशिरेमासि पैापे विष्णु सनातन : ।
वरुणो माघमासे तु सुर्येऽ वै फाळगुनेपित ॥
चैत्रमासे तपेद्भानुवैशाखे तपन् :स्मृत : ।
ज्येष्ठेमासे तपेदिन्द्र आशाड़े तपते रवि ॥
गभस्ति श्रावणे मासे यमो भाद्रपदे तथा ।
हिरण्यरेताश्वयुजि : कार्त्तिके तु दिवाकर : ॥
इतैऽते द्वादशादित्या मासि मासि प्रकिर्त्तिता :।
उररूपा महातेजा युगान्तालनवर्च्चस : ॥

- श्री पद्मपुराणं – सृष्टिखण्ड - ५८ शत् अध्याय

Sl. No. 03

अन्यत्र –

इन्द्रोधाता भगस्त्वष्टा मित्रोथ वरुणोर्य्यमा ।
बिवस्वान् सविता पूषा अशुंमान् विष्णुरेवच ॥
एते सहस्र किरणा आदित्या : द्वादश स्मृता : ।
मारीचात् कश्यपात् यज्ञे पुत्रानदितिरुत्तमान् ॥

- श्री पद्मपुराणं – सृष्टिखण्ड - ६ठ अध्याय ।

Sl. No. 04

भास्करो भगवान् सूर्य्यश्चित्रभानुर्विभावसु : ।
यमस्तातेशुमाली च यमुना-प्रीति-दायक ॥
दिवाकरो जगन्नाथ : सप्ताश्वश्च प्रभाकर : ।
ळोकचक्षु स्वयम्भुश्च छाया-रति-प्रदायक : ॥
तिंमिरारिर्दिनधवो ळोकत्रय-प्रकाशक : ।
भक्तवन्धुर्दयासिन्धु : कर्मसाक्षी परात्पर : ॥
एकविंशति नामानि य : पठेतु दिते मयि ।
तस्य शान्तिं प्रयछामि स्वयंसत्यं वदाम्यहं ॥

- कपिलसंहिता - ६ठ अध्याय ।

Sl. No. 05

मम्मटभट्ट सूर्य्यशतकं कृत्वा कुष्ठरोगाद्बिमुक्तिं ळेभे ।

Sl. No. 06

आरोग्यं भास्करादिच्छेद्ज्ञानमिच्छेत्तु शङ्करात् ।
मुक्तिन्च केशवादिच्छेद्धन मिच्छेद्धुताशनात् ॥

गोयीचन्द्र – संक्षिप्तसार वऽकरण टीका

Sl. No. 07

न येाग्य परिचर्य्यायां जम्बुद्वीपे ममानघ ।
ममपूजा परान्कृत्वा शाकद्वीपादिहानय ॥
मगश्च मामगाश्चैव मानसा मन्दगास्तथा ।
तन्मगान् ममपूजार्थं शाकद्वीपादिहानय ॥

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Sl. No. 08

आरम्भ भवतोजन्म पावन्नन्दाभिषेचनं ।
एतद्बर्ष सहस्रन्तु शतं पंन्चदशोत्तरं ।

-भागबत – द्वादश स्कन्द – ३य अधऽाव्य – २६ श्लोक

Sl. No. 09

ळबणास्योदधेस्तीरे पबित्रे सुमनोहरे ।
शर्बत्र बाळुकाकीर्णे देशे सर्ब गुणान्विते ।।
चम्पकाशोकबकुलै : करवीरै : सपाटलै : ।
पुन्नागै : कर्णिकारेश्च बकुलैर्नागकेशरै : ।।

- ब्रह्मपुराण

Sl. No. 10

(ରାମ)

ଦେଖିଲେ ଅଛି ଦିବ୍ୟ ବନ । ଆନନ୍ଦ ରାଜୀବ ଲୋଚନ ॥
ନାନା କୁସୁମେ ଲତାକୁଳ । ଗୁଳ୍ମ ବଲ୍ଲରୀ ଯେ ଗହଳ ॥
ମାଳତୀ ମାଳ ନାଗେଶ୍ୱର । ଚମ୍ପକ ବକୁଳ କେଶର ॥
ଧବ ଖଦିର କୁରୁବକ । ପାଟଳୀ ବକୁଳ ଅଶୋକ ॥
ମତ୍ତ ମାତଙ୍ଗ ପୃଥ୍ ମୃଗ । ବରାହ ସ୍ତବକ କୁରଙ୍ଗ ॥
ଶୁକ କୋକିଳ ଶାରୀ ହଂସ । ରାବ କରନ୍ତି ଅହର୍ନିଶ ॥

- ପ୍ରାଚୀ ମାହାତ୍ମ୍ୟ - ୮ମ ଅଧ୍ୟାୟ

Sl. No. 11

नम : नम : सवित्रे जगदेब चक्षुषे जगत्-पसूति-स्थिति-नाश-हेतबे ;
तैमयाय त्रिगुणात्मधारिणे बिरान्चि-नारायण-शङ्करात्मने नम : …

Sl. No. 12

ତାହାଙ୍କ (ଚଣ୍ଡଘଣ୍ଟା) ନୈଋତ ଦିଗରେ ।
ତପସ୍ୟା କଲେ ଦିନକରେ ॥
ହେଲେ ସେ ତେଜଙ୍କର ଧାମ ।
ବ୍ରହ୍ମାଣ୍ଡେ ହେଲେ ଅନୁପମ ॥

- ପ୍ରାଚୀ ମାହାତ୍ମ୍ୟ - ୭ଷ ଅଧ୍ୟାୟ

Sl. No. 13

ପବନ ଭକ୍ଷି ତପ କରି । ସୁସିଦ୍ଧ ନିୟମ ଆଚରି ॥
ଆପେ ଆପକୁ ଆରାଧନ । କରି ନାଶିଲେ ପାପମନ ॥

- ପ୍ରାଚୀ ମାହାତ୍ମ୍ୟ - ୭ଷ ଅଧ୍ୟାୟ

Sl. No. 14

ଅର୍କତୀର୍ଥରେ ମୁନିମାନେ । ତପ କରନ୍ତି ଅନୁକ୍ଷଣେ ॥
ଇନ୍ଦ୍ରଙ୍କୁ ଆଦି ଯେତେ ସୁର । ସେ ସ୍ଥାନେ କଲେ ତପଘୋର ॥
ତହିଁ ତପସ୍ୟା ସିଦ୍ଧ କରି । ସ୍ୱର୍ଗେ ହୋଇଲେ ଅଧିକାରୀ ॥
ଅର୍କତୀର୍ଥରେ ତପକରି । ଶୁକ ହୋଇଲେ ଯୋଗଧାରୀ ॥
ଅର୍କତୀର୍ଥରେ ସ୍ନାନ କଲେ । କଦ୍ରୁ ତୁଥିଇ ପୁଣ୍ୟ ବଳେ ॥
ପୂର୍ବେ ସନକାଦୟ ଯେତେ । ତପସ୍ୟା କଲେ ଅର୍କତୀର୍ଥେ ॥

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ବ୍ୟାସଙ୍କୁ ଆଦି ମୁନି ଯେତେ । ଖ୍ୟାତ ହୋଇଲେ ସେ ଜଗତେ ॥
ପୂର୍ବେ ଯେ ଜମ୍ବୁବତୀ ସୁତ । ସେ ତୀର୍ଥେ ହେଲେ ଉପଗତ ॥
ଅର୍କତୀର୍ଥରେ ସ୍ନାନ କରି । ଯିବି ଯେ ବୋଲେ ହେଳାକରି॥
ଯେତେ ପକାଇ ଯାଇ ପାଦ । ତେତିକି ଯାଗଫଳପ୍ରଦ ॥

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ଏ ପ୍ରାଚୀ ସରସ୍ୱତୀ ନୀର । ମାର୍ଜନେ ଔଷଧ ଦେହର ।।
ବିଶେଷେ ଅର୍କତୀଥ ନୀର । ମୁକ୍ତି ଦିଅଇ ନିରନ୍ତର ।।
ସର୍ଗେ ବାଞ୍ଛନ୍ତି ସର୍ବ ସୁର । କି ରୂପେ ହେବା ମର୍ତ୍ତ୍ୟ ନର।।
ଅର୍କତୀର୍ଥରେ କରି ସ୍ନାନ । ଗମନ୍ତୁ ପୁଣି ନିଜ ସ୍ଥାନ ।।

- ପ୍ରାଚୀ ମାହାତ୍ମ୍ୟ - ୬ଷ୍ଠ ଅଧ୍ୟାୟ

Sl. No. 15

ଯେ ଅବା ମହାରୋଗୀ ହୁଏ । ବୈଦ୍ୟ ଯାହାକୁ ଛାଡ଼ିଯାଏ ।।
ସେ ନର ଜଲେ ତହିଁ ସ୍ନାନ ।ନିରୋଗୀ ହୁଅଇ ବହନ ।।

- ପ୍ରାଚୀ ମାହାତ୍ମ୍ୟ - ୬ଷ୍ଠ ଅଧ୍ୟାୟ

Sl. No. 16

ଭଲା ରାମଚଣ୍ଡୀ ଭଲାରେ
କଳାପାହାଡ଼କୁ ଦୁଆରେ ବସାଇ
ଭଲା ପାଣି ପାଇଁ ଗଲାରେ ।।

Sl. No. 17

ପୂର୍ବ କାଳରେ ପ୍ରାଚୀତୀରେ । ଚିତ୍ର ଚାଣ୍ଡାଳ ପୁରକରେ ।।
ସର୍ବ ଜନରେ ନିଷ୍ଠାପର । ହୋଇ ସେଠାରେ କରେ ଘର ।।
ତା' ସଙ୍ଗେ କଣ୍ଟିତ୍ ଦ୍ୱିଜ ନାରୀ । ଉପଳା ନାମେ ସେ କୁମାରୀ ।।
ବିହାର କରେ ତା ସଙ୍ଗରେ । ପତ୍ନୀ ଭାବରେ ନିରନ୍ତରେ ।।
ପୂର୍ବ ଜନ୍ମର ପାପବଳେ । ସନ୍ତାନହୀନ ହେଲା କାଳେ ।।
ଏ ରୂପେ କେତେ କାଳ ଗଲା । ମରଣ କାଳ ଆସି ହେଲା ।।
ଚିତ୍ର-ଉପଳା ଦୁହିଁଙ୍କର । ଜୀବ ଛାଡ଼ିଲା କଳେବର ।।
ସେ ଦୁହିଁଙ୍କର ତନୁ ଜାତ । ସେ ନଦୀ ସେ ଦିନୁଁ ବିଖ୍ୟାତ ।।
X X X X X X X X X X X
ଚିତ୍ରକ ଉପଳା ନାମରେ । ଲିଙ୍ଗ ହୋଇଲେ ଦୁଇ ତୀରେ ।।
କହିଲି ଦ୍ୱିଜବରମାନେ । ଚିତ୍ର-ଉପଳା ହେଲା ନାମେ ।।

- ପ୍ରାଚୀ ମାହାତ୍ମ୍ୟ – ୨ୟ ଅଧ୍ୟାୟ (୭ – ୧୭)

Sl. No. 18

१. जवा-कुसुम-सङ्काशं-काश्यपेयं महाद्युतिं ।
ध्वान्तारिं सर्वपापघ्नं प्रेणतोस्मि दिबाकरं ।१।।
२. दिव्यशङ्खं तुषाराभं क्षीरोदार्णब-सम्भवं
नमामि शशिनं भक्त्या शम्भोर्मुकुट-भुषणं ।२।।
३. धरणीगर्भसम्भूतं विद्यूत्पुञ्ज-समप्रभं ।
कुमारं शक्तिहस्तञ्च ळोहिताङ्क नमाम्यहं ।३।।
४. प्रियङ्कु कलिकाश्यामं रुपेणाप्रतिमं बुधं ।
शौम्यं सर्बगुणोपेतं नमामि शशिन : सुतं ।४।।
५. देबतानामृषीणां च गुरु कनक-सन्निभं ।
बन्द्य भूतं त्रिळोकेशं प्रणमामि बृहस्पतिम् ।५।।
६. हिम-कुन्द-मृणालाभं दैत्यानां परमं गुरुं ।
शर्ब-शास्त्र-प्रवक्तारं भार्गवं प्रणमाम्यहं ।६।।
୭.नीलाञ्जनचय-प्रेक्षं रवि-सूनुं महाग्रहं ।
छाययागर्भसम्भुतं बन्दे भक्त्या शनैश्चरं ।୭।।
୮. अर्ध्दकायं महाघोरं चन्द्रादित्यबिमर्द्दकं ।
सिंहिकाया सुतं रौद्रं तं राहुं प्रणमाम्यहं ।୮।।
୯.पलालधुमसंकाशं तारागृहबिमर्द्दकं ।
रौद्रं रुद्रात्मजं कुरं तं केतुं प्रणमाम्यहं ।୯।।

Sl. No. 19

"ଇହାଙ୍କ ଉତ୍ତାରୁ ଇହାଙ୍କୁ ପୋଲାଙ୍କୁଳୀୟ ନରସିଂହ ଦେବ ଭୋଗବାନ୪୫ ବର୍ଷ ।
ଶକାବ୍ଦ ୧୨୦୪ । ଏ ରାଜା ଅର୍କକ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ କୋଣାର୍କ ଦେବଙ୍କୁ ଦେଉଳ ତୋଡ଼ାଇଲେ ।

- ଏ ରାଜାର ମୁଦକ -

- ମାଦଳାପାଞ୍ଜି

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Sl. No. 20 सपुछनरसिंहेन क्ष्मेश्वरेणांशुमालिन : ।
प्रासाद : कारितेा राज्ञा शके द्वादशके शते ।।

- मादलापांजि

Sl. No. 21 वेदर्भुव्योमचन्द्रप्रमित – ताम्र अनुशासन – ३६ श्लोक

Sl. No. 22 कुर्वन प्रकाशमनिशं द्विजसाच्च कृत्वा,
मेरु तुलापुरुषमुख्यमहार्थ-दानै : ।
स्थातुं सुरै : सह मह : कलयंश्च केाणा-
केाणे कुटीरकमचीकरदुष्मरश्मे : ।।

– ताम्र अनुशासन – ८६ श्लोक

Sl. No. 23 भुजभुवि गिरयेाष्टै यस्य भूमीन्द्र भर्त्तु :
क्षिति च रण समर्था : किञ्चदिक् कुञ्जरेान्द्रा : ।
अतुलय दिह सस्वच्चेत् (शाश्वच्चेत् ?) तुल पुरुषेण
क्वभवतु कनकाद्रिर्देबतानां गुहाभूत् ।८5।

– ताम्र अनुशासन – ८५ श्लोक

Sl. No. 24 जननी सर्व भूतानां सप्तमी सप्त सुप्तिके
सर्व व्याहृतिके देवी नमस्ते रविमन्डले ।।

- चन्द्रभागा स्नान मन्त्र

Sl. No. 25 त्वमेव सा त्वं साबित्री त्वं देवी जननी परा ।
त्वयैव धार्य्यते सर्वं (त्वयैतध्धार्य्यतेविश्वं)
त्वयैतत् सृज्यते जगत् ।७५।
त्वयैतत् पाळ्यते देवि त्वमस्त्यन्ते च सर्बदा ।
विसृष्टै सृष्टि रूपात्वं स्थितिरूपा च पालने ।७६।
तथा संहृति रूपान्ते, जगतेास्य जगन्मये ।
महाविद्या, महामाया, महामेधा, महास्मृति : ।७७।
x x x x x x x x x x
परापराणां परमा त्वमेव परमेश्वरी ।
यच्च किन्वित् क्वचित् बस्तु सदसद वा खिलात्मिके ।८२।
तस्य सर्वस्य या शक्ति : सात्वंङ्कि स्तूयसे तदा ।

- श्रीचन्डी – प्रथम चरित्र – प्रथम माहात्म्य

Sl. No. 26 तृप्नाळये पुणि सीमातीत सुखराज्ये बिहरन्ति मुदे ।

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APPENDIX -II

MEDIEVAL AND ANCIENT TERMS

Names / Terms	Explanation
Abakasha	The nap taken by the gods and goddesses just after launch in the afternoon. In general it means rest or holiday.
Abul Fazl	The famous chronicler in the court of Emperor Akbar who wrote a famous book on India titled Ain-I-Akbari which has been translated to English and other languages by many people.
Acharya	The teacher or the Guru of ancient India or a learned person who imparts his specialised knowledge to others
Aditya	It is one of the names of the Sun
Agni	Fire or the God of Fire
Ain-I-Akbari	The famous book on India written by the chronicler in the court of Emperor Akbar, Abul Fazl which has been translated to English and other languages by many people.
Airabata	The divine white elephant Airabata is the carrier of the God of Rain and king of the heaven, Indra
Amalaka Shila	The heavy piece of circular stone having corrugated or ribbed sides like that of the fruit Amla (Indian Gooseberry) that is placed at the top of the temple walls to load its walls for stability.
Amla	A healthy fruit having ribbed sides which is known in English as Indian Gooseberry.
Anangabhima Deba	One of the greatest kings of Orissa who ascended the throne in 1175 AD and ruled till 1202 AD. He built the present temple of Jagannatha in Puri.
Ananta	Refers to something without end or infinite. It is one of the names of Vishnu
Ananta Gumpha	The cave at Khandagiri in Bhubaneswar is also known as Snake Cave. It belongs to the period of Emperor Kharavela. The cave is beautifully carved with twin serpents, Gajalakshmi, athletes, elephants, geese, boys chasing lions, bulls and other animals.
Ananta Vasudeba	Ananta Vasudeba temple in Bhubaneswar was constructed in 1869 by Chandrika the daughter of Anangabhima Deba - III. The deities worshipped here are Krishna, Balaam and Subhadra standing under a seven hooded serpent. It is a Vaishnav temple.
Anantasayana	Vishnu sleeping with half closed eyes in the deep sea on the bed formed by the coiled body of a snake with its thousand hoods protecting Vishnu. Lakshmi and Saraswati, the two consorts of Vishnu sitting by his side.
Anartha Paga	Paga means pillar or wall. Anartha Paga is the pillar placed in between the Konaka Paga (Corner Pillar) and the Raha Paga (Middle Pillar) of a Pancharatha Rekha type temple
Anguli	Old Indian Measure of Length. The measure of one Anguli means the width of one finger of a grown up man. Two Angulis areapproximately equivalent to 1½ inches.
Anka	The number of years of reign of the Kings of Odisha counted chronologically from the birthday of Vamana (a yearly ritual) in the year the king ascends the throne
Anna Prasada	Cooked rice offered to the God and later eaten by the people considering it as sacred food.
Antabhanga Khamba	A pillar being narrow at the centre suddenly becomes broad at both sides of the centre and then gradually narrows down towards both ends to become narrow again at the ends.
Antarala	The Porch, the entrance hall, the Mukhashala or the Jagamohana is also known as Antarala. However, it is raillery used by the common people.
Apsara	A divine female beauty, a fairy, celestial female dancer. The term is also usually used to describe an extremely beautiful girl.
Arkabata	A sacred banyan tree existing inside the campus of Konarka temple
Arkakshetra	The abode of the Sun or the holy place where the worship of the Sun is carried out.
Aruna Stambha	A pillar that was originally placed in front of the main entrance of the temple of Konarka is now placed in front of the main entrance (Singha Dwara or Lions Gate or the Eastside Entrance) of the Jagannatha temple in Puri. The Pillar was transported to Puri by the Marahattas in the 19th century after the main temple of Konarka collapsed.
Ashok	Popularly known was Ashok the Great is one of the greatest emperors of India belonging to the Maurya dynasty. His full name was Ashok Bindusara Maurya. He ruled from 274 BC to 232 BC and fought the Kalinga War in 265-264 BC where he was changed from Chandashoka to Dharmashoka and adopted Buddhism.
Ashtha Chandi	The eight deities of Shakti installed around a holy Centre of the Hindus for protection of the temple and the holy zone of the prime deity of the place.
Ashwinikumar	The twin brothers born to Sun and his wife Sajna. Both of them serve as the experts of medicine for the gods and the goddesses.
Astadhatu	Gold, Silver, Brass, Bell Metal, Lead, Iron, Zinc, Mercury are called together as Asta Dhatu and an alloy of all these metals are used for molding the deities.
Astamatruka	The eight divine mothers, each holding a baby in their hands are responsible for continuation of life on this earth.
Asta Shambhu	The eight deities of Shiva installed around a holy centre of the Hindus for protection of the temple and the holy zone of the prime deity of the place.

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Asthatala	Tala means Chakhanda or a crude and common measurement which is equal to the straight-line length from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the middle finger of the hand when the fingers are spread to the maximum. The meaning of Astatala image is that the height from the end of the chin to the top of its head is equal to one eighth of the total height of the image. This is determined by Sukraniti a rule enumerated by Saint Sukracharya for proportionate size for construction of images in Dwapara Yuga. In Kaliyuga only Saptatala images are made where this ratio is 1:7 and not 1:8 as applied in Dwapara Yuga.
Athharanala	An ancient culvert built on the River Musha at the entrance of Puri. The culvert has eighteen spans or arches of typical style. It is an example of ancient structural design.
Bada	This is the lowest portion of the temple wall. It is constructed vertically from the plinth up to 1/3 height of the total planned height of the temple. The upper part of the wall, beyond Bada, up to the neck of the temple is constructed with a gradual inclination towards the inside of the temple in case of Rekha type temples and in stepped manner in case of Pidha type temples.
Bada Singhara	Usually the deities of gods and goddesses are decorated with flowers, light ornaments, vermillion and sandal paste, etc. in the late evening just before going to bed.
Baitarani	It one of the major rivers of Odisha. It starts from Gonasika in the District of Keonjhar in Odisha and meets the Bay of Bengal at its mouth in Chandbali.
Balabhadra	Balabhadra is the elder brother of Lord Jagannatha and is worshipped in the temple of Puri along with the deities of sister Subhadra and brother Jagannatha.
Balabhoga	Ballava or snacks or light food offered to the god in the morning.
Bali Dwipa	Dwipa means island. Bali is an island located in the Indian Ocean between Java and Borneo in the southeast direction from Konarka. The merchants from Kalinga -Utkal were sailing to these distant places and also to Philippines for trade and commerce.
Ballava	Balabhoga or light snacks offered to the god in the morning.
Balmiki	A famous saint who was once a dreaded dacoit. He also authored the famous epic of the Hindus, Ramayana.
Bana Lata	Wild creepers grown in the forests. The leaves and stems of this type of creepers are usually thick.
Bandhana	A horizontal raised surface running around the structure, specially the temples like a band with or without decoration
Banshabali	An ancient book written in Sanskrit language depicting the chronology of the ruling period of different kings in Orissa.
Barabati	A fort located in the city of Cuttack in Orissa. It was constructed in the 12th century by Anangabhima Deba. It is constructed with laterite and sand stone and protected by large rivers at two sided and other auxiliary forts around it was considered as one of the strongest forts in India.
Barajhanji	A creeper usually found near the ponds. The creeper bears beautiful flowers.
Barandi	The portion of a wall or a pillar or any other portion indented from the exposed side is known as Barandi in the terms of the Shilpa Shastra or medieval construction engineering manual of Odisha
Barchha	The spears used as a weapon. It is a part of the attire of Kartikeya, the son of Shiva.
Basanta	A part of the decorative sections having a rectangular cross-section
Bashistha	A famous saint.
Basudeba	Basudeba or Vasudeva is the father of Krishna.
Beki	The neck of the temple over which the circular stone block Beki Chakada is placed to close the opening at the top of the temple wall. Over the Beki Chakada the Amalaka Shila and the Kalasha, etc. are placed.
Beki Chakada	It is a circular piece of stone. Beki Chakada is placed to close the opening at the top of the temple wall at the Beki or neck. Over the Beki Chakada the Amalaka Shila and the Kalasha, etc. are placed.
Bhagabata	A famous epic, the Odia version of which was written by Sarala Das
Bhargavi	Bhargavi is a river flowing in the District of Puri. It is branch of the River Daya which is itself a branch of River Kuakhai.
Bhoga	The offerings made to the gods and goddesses. It may be cooked rice, cereals, fruits, vegetables, sweets or other snacks. After offering to god it is sold or distributed free of cost to the devotees and pilgrims.
Bhoga Mandapa	A subsidiary temple built usually adjacent to the Natya Mandira where large quantities of offerings are made to the god. Unlike Mukhashala, it was a later addition to the temple complexes of Odisha to meet the rising demand for cooked rice offerings. It is not an essential part of the temple complex and in case of many temples Bhogamandapa is added to the temple complex at a much later period to meet the demand of offering or Bhoga.
Bhumi	Literally it means ground or earth. However, with reference to the temple architecture it means the planes the temple is divided vertically during construction. Extra support is provided to the temple walls at each Bhumi with subsidiary roofs supported by iron beams.
Bibhandaka	A saint of Tretaya Yuga who based his hermitage in the forest of Bajrabhumi (West Birbhum). It was a center of tantric activities and was also known as Kamakoti.
Binayaka Kshetra	Binayaka or Vinayak is another name of Ganesha, the son of Shiva and Parvatiwhose head was replaced with that of an elephant. A centre for Binayaka worship is known as a Binayaka Kshetra.
Bishwakarma	The carpenter of the Gods and the goddesses. He is the God of Engineering and technology. He is also the father of Sanjna who married to the Sun God. Aswinikumar twins being born to the Sun and Sajna are the grandsons of Bishwakarma.
Bishwakosha	A journal of ancient history and archaeology published from Calcutta (Kolkata)
Bodhidruma	A banyan tree under which Buddha was enlightened after meditating for 41 days.
Brahma	Brahma is the creator of this universe.
Brahmachari	One who observes Brahmacharya or celibacy is a Brahmachari. The young pupils in the ancient schools of the gurus are called Brahmachari.

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Brahminical	Anything associated with the traditions and customs of the Hindu religion or with the Brahmins in particular are called so.
Brahmins	In the Hindu cast system Brahmins are placed at the highest position and are considered as learned persons. They conduct the rituals and worships, etc. for the god and goddesses on behalf of the other casts in the society.
Bruhaspati	The largest of all the planets and is considered as the guru of the gods.
Brundabana	The abode of Krishna from his teen age to the end. Krishna though was born in Mathura, moved to Brundabana in his early teens and made it his abode. Both Mathura and Brundabana are situated in the present province of Uttar Pradesh in India.
Car Festival	The images of gods and goddesses are taken on a tour on chariots drawn by the devotees. The most famous is the Car Festival of Lord Jagannatha in Puri. The Buddhist also observed it with relics placed on chariots.
Chakhanda	A measure of length, The distance between the tip of the thumb to the tip of the middle finger of a grown up man with all the fingers spread out
Chakra	A metal wheel with spokes usually placed atop the Vishnu temples. It is also one of the attires of Vishnu and used as his weapon.
Chala	The roof in local Odia language is known as Chala. The term is mostly used for, but not restricted to, thatched roofs.
Chalanti Pratima	The representative deity of the image of god which is carried to the festival and ritual sites in place of the original image of the temple for convenience. Except the images of Jagannatha, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Sudarshana in the temple of Puri, no other original deity of a temple is carried to the festival sites.
Chandi	The supreme tantric goddess like Durga and Kali
Chandrabhaga	The sacred river in Konarka now reduced to a pond only. It was once a branch of the now-vanished River Chitrotpala. It is also known as Suryaganga in epics.
Chandrabhaga Snana Yatra	The festival observed on the day of Magha Shukla Saptami at Konarka when people take a dip in the sacred Chandrabhaga early in the morning to get rid of all sins.
Chandraloka	The abode in the moon
Chaurasa	Square. A Chaurasa temple is a square temple having only four square walls, one on each side, without any specific pillars or Pagas dividing each side walls in to different sections.
Chelitola	The famous capital city of Odisha existing near Konarka, on the banks of River Chitrotpala during the period of Hieun Tsang's visit.
Chhaya	Literally means "Shadow". It is the name of one of the two wives of the Sun.
Cubit	
	An ancient measure of length which is the length from the tip of the middle finger to the end of elbow of a grown up man's hand. It is approximately equivalent to 1 foot and 6 inches.
Dakshinayana	The annual movement of Sun from northeast to southeast. The sun moves from northeast to southeast and again from southeast back to the northeast during the year. The movement from southeast to the northeast is known as Uttarayana.
Dambaru	A small two sided drum to which two strings with an earthen ball or a bead attached to their free end and the other ends of the strings attached to the middle of the Drum's body. It is played by holding it with hand at the centre and rapidly moving it back and forth to produce a tom tom sound with the balls striking the drum membranes glued to the sides.
Dashakama	When a part of the temple or any other structure in the complex is divided in to ten sections and each section is decorated differently it is called Dashakama. Dasha means ten and kama or karma means work.
Dasharatha	Father of Ramachandra as described in the famous epic Ramayana.
Dashatala	The image, where the total height of the human image is ten times the height if its face from the bottom of the chin to the top of the forehead. As per "Shukra Niti" devised by the famous saint Shukra, the images in Satya Yuga are built as Dashatala images.
Daya	A branch river of River Kuakhai which is itself a branch of River Kathhajodi.
Deula	Deula or Bada Deula or Vimana is the main temple or the sanctum of the temple complex where the prime deity is installed.
Deula Karana	The chronicler of the temple who records chronologically the events related to the happenings in the temple. The Deula Karana of Jagannatha temple in Puri writes the Madala Panji.
Devi	Goddess
Dhupa	The ritual or the process of offering food to the god.
Dhwaja Padma	The lotus shape placed at the top of the temple on which the Chakra or the trident carrying a Dhwaja or Flag is mounted.
Dola Festival	It is Hindu festival observed in the bright half of the month of Phalguna (February-March) followed by 'Holi' or the Festival of Colours.
Dolamandapa	Usually it is a pandal having an arch constructed on it. A swing is attached to this arch where Lord Krishna and his consort Radha come for a swing during the festival of Dola.
Dori	A thin portion either recessed or raised from the main surface of the decorated structure running horizontally usually to separate two sections of decoration.
Durbasa	A famous saint known for his anger.
Dwadashaditya	The twelve names of the Sun God.
Dwapara Yuga	It is one of the four yugas which precedes the present Kaliyuga. The four Yugas running chronologically are Satyayuga, Tretayayuga, Dwaparayuga and Kaliyuga.
Dwaraka	Located in Gujurat It is one of the most ancient cities of India and is famous as the dwelling place of Lord Krishna
Ekamra Kanana	The ancient name of Bhubaneshwar.

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Fa Hian	The famous Chinese traveler who visited India and Ceylon in search of Buddhist scriptures during the period 399 – 414 AD. He also visited Odisha during his tour of India.
Gada	The mace. It is the favourite weapon of Hanuman of Ramayana, Bhima of Mahabharata and also one of the weapons of Vishnu.
Gajalakshmi	Gaja means elephant and Lakshmi is the Goddess of Wealth. Gajalakshmi is a variant of Lakshmi. One elephant holding a water pot with its trunk is always seen at each side of Gajalakshmi and sometimes the deity or the painting of Gajalakshmi is placed above the doorways of temples and homes.
Gajasadhana	One who has mastered the art of taming and bringing up the elephant. The Kings of Orissa are honoured with titles like Gajasadhana because of their elephant related activities.
Gaja-Shardula or	
Gaja-Singha	Gaja means elephant and Shardula means cougar or lion. The term defines a statue of Elephant with Cougar or Lion.
Ganapatya	One who belongs to the Ganapatya sect of Hindu religion or worships Ganesha as his prime god. In general anything related to lord Ganesh is also known as Ganapatya.
Gandharba	Gandharva or Gandharba are Celestial male musicians
Ganesha	The youngest son of Shiva and Parvati. The head of Ganesh was replaced by an elephant head with a trunk after his original head was severed by his father Shiva as a punishment.
Ganesha Gumpha	Located in Udayagiri of Kahandagiri-Udayagiri complex in Bhubaneswar, Odisha Ganesh Gumpha or cave belongs to the 1st century BC. There is an elephant at the front of the cave and a carving of elephant at the right of the back-wall.
Garva Mudra	The circular piece of stone placed on the top of the walls of a temple at the beki to close the roof.
Gayasura	Vishnu had once fought a severe warwith this demonand finally killed him. However, some say that Gayasura is nothing but Buddhism imagined as a demon with whom Vishnu or the Hindus had to fight for survival.
Gayatri	Gayatri is the consort of Brahma and a universal hymn has been created in her honour.
Gelabai	The female divine entertainers or the Apsaras
Golaragada	A place near Konarka which was famous for harboring a deep forest
Gopapura	The abode of the Gopis
Gopi	The females of Gopapura who are also the playmates of Lord Krishna.
Graha	Planets. Naba Graha means nine planets placed above the doorway of most of the temples for their protection from the ill spirits and other hazards. Seven of the Naba Graha relate to the seven days of the week and the rest two relate to their ascending and descending lunar nodes.
Gundicha Temple	The rest house for the gods and goddesses at the destination of their journey during the car festival.
Gurukula	The ancient residential schools for the teens usually run by the saints in their ashrams at secluded places.
Hara	Mahadev
Hari	Vishnu
Harihara	Combination of Mahadeva or Shiva and Vishnu
Hieun Tsang	The famous Chinese traveler who traveled Odisha in the 7th Century, in the year 639 AD to be precise. He wrote about the Buddhist Monuments, Buddhist Centres and other places in his famous travelogue Si-Yuki.
Ihudi	The Jews are known as Ihudi
Indra	The King of the heaven, the abode of the gods and the goddesses. He is considered as the God of Rain and Thunder. The elephant Airabata is the carrier of Indra. Indra also rides Puspaka Ratha, a horse drawn cart which also has the capability to fly in the sky.
Jagamohana	The porch of the temple complex which provides the main entrance to the temple sanctum sanctorum. It is also known as Mohana, Mukhashala or Antarala.
Jagannatha	The prime god of the Hindus and an Avatar of Vishnu is a wooden image installed in the temple of Puri along with Balabhadra and Subhadra, his elder brother and younger sister respectively.
Jangha	The thigh of a human body. In case of a temple, it is the part above the foot or Pada and below the Gandi or the middle portion of it. Jangha is divided in two parts like upper Jangha and lower Jangha.
Jataka	It is an epic of the Buddhists which carries descriptive stories about Buddha
Java	An island between Sumatra and Borneo. It is also known as Shweta Dwipa and was often being visited by the Odia sailors for the purpose of trade and commerce.
Kahana	1 Kahana Cowri = 1280 Cowries; In 1803 AD 4 Kahana Cowries = 5120 Cowries = 1 Rupee ; At the time Cowri or a kind of shell was used as the unit of currency
Kailash Parvat	A peak in the Himalayas which is believed to be the abode of Lord Shiva
Kalapahada	A Hindu converted to Muslim by marriage to a Muslim woman who defeated the last Hindu King of Orissa, Mukunda Deba and took revenge on the Hindus by destroying many famous temples and images of Odisha
Kalasha	Literally means a water pitcher. The top portion of a temple is shaped like an inverted water pitcher and hence named as Kalasha.
Kalashapada	The circular and flat stone block on which the Kalasha is placed is known as Kalasha Pada or the foot of Kalasha.
Kali	The ferocious looking naked Hindu Goddess.
Kalidas	A famous poet of the ancient age who has created many Sanskrit classics in poetry like "Meghdoot". It is said that he was enlightened by Saraswati, the goddess of wisdom.

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Kalinga	It is the ancient name of Orissa or Odisha. Kalinga was a very powerful and prosperous kingdom in the medieval period which excelled in all fields like art, craft, culture, architecture, trade and commerce.
Kaliyuga	Kaliyuga, the age of sin is supposed to have stated in 3100 BC after the end of Dwapara Yuga
Kamandalu	A copper or brass water pot with a handle at the top usually carried by the priests and the saints
Kani	One of the decorative sections having a wedge shaped edge unlike Basanta. It is usually placed below the Basanta section.
Kansa	The maternal uncle of SriKrishna. Kansa planned to kill SriKrishna as he was destined to be killed by SriKrishna
Kansapura	The kingdom of Kansa or the abode of Kansa
Kapila	A very learned ancient sage and founder of Sankhya philosophy, who had his Ashram established in Sagara Dwipa, known as Patalapuri in ancient age.
Kapila Samhita	The epic created by saint Kapila.
Kapilavastu	A place located at the foot of the Himalayas where the Buddha was born
Karpuri	The part of a temple below the Kalasha Pada and above the Amalaka Shila. It is also known as Khapuri. The Kalasha along with the Kalasha Pada is placed over it.
Kartikeya	The eldest son of Shiva and Parvati and brother of Ganesha
Kashyap	An ancient sage
Kathhajodi	A branch ofthe largest river in Odisha, that is, of Mahanadi
Kathhi	An ancient unit of measure for length which is equivalent to 1 foot and 9 inches
Kaudi	Kaudi or Cowri was used as a currency for different transactions in the ancient days before the use of gold for the purpose
Khapuri	The part below the Kalasha and Kalasha Pada and above the Amalaka Shila is known as Khapuri. The Kalasha along with Kalasha Pada is placed on it.
Khuraprusthha	The upper plinth of a temple is known as Khuraprusthha or Upara Pithha
Konaditya	'Kona' means corner and 'Aditya' means the Sun. Konaditya means the sun at the corner.
Konaka Paga	Paga means pillar. Konaka means corner. Konaka Paga is the pillar placed at the corners of the temple wall.
Koshala	The western part of Odisha consisting of the present districts of Sambalpur, Sonepur and some other areas inside and beyond the present boundary of the State.
Kranti Chalana	Movement of the equinoxes
Krishna	An avatar of Vishnu in Dwapara Yuga in the days of the great epic of Mahabharata.
Kshema	A disciple of Buddha, who is presumed to have belonged to Odisha. He carried the tooth relic of Buddha from the pyre to present it to the King of Kalinga Brahmadatta.
Kshetramahatmya	The significance of a religious place usually described in an epic.
Kuakhai	A branch of River Mahanadi in the district of Cuttack and Puri in Odisha
Kubera	Described in the epics of the Hindu religion as the God of Wealth and the King of the Yakshas (semi-divine beings)
Kumaril	Kumaril Bhatta was a 7th century Hindu Vedic philosopher from the state of Assam, India who fought successfully towards extinction of Buddhism in India.
Kumbha	Water pitcher. The stone block placed above the Amalaka Shila at the top of the temple resembles the pitcher placed upside down.
Kumbha Stone	The stone block placed above the Amalaka Shila at the top of the temple resembling a pitcher placed upside down.
Kushabhadra	A branch of River Kuakhai, originating at Balianta ends on meeting the Bay of Bengal at the temple of goddess Ramachandi located at 15 miles east of Puri. The river is also known as River Liyakhia.
Lakshmana	The dedicated brother of Rama, son of Dasharatha of Hindu epic Ramayana. Lakshmana was banished along with Rama and his wife Sita to spent twelve years in the forest.
Lakshmi	The Hindu goddess of wealth and one of the consorts of Lord Vishnu. The other wife of Vishnu is Saraswati, the goddesses of wisdom and knowledge.
Langula Narasingha Deba	The famous King of Odisha (Orissa) who built the temple of Konarka. He was known as Langula or having a tail probably because of some physical deformity at the lowest portion of his spinal cord. However, the fact is not strongly supported by evidence.
Lanka	The present day Ceylon. It is famous in Indian epics like Ramayana for its King Ravana and the fight between Rama and Ravana for Sita. Ceylon had a deep relationship with India since the ancient days. The tooth relic ofBuddha is kept there.
Lati Lata	Creepers without flowers
Liyakhia	The present River Kushabhadra is also known as River Liyakhia and at its mouth is situated at the temple of Ramachandi near Konarka where it meets the Bay of Bengal.
Lingam	A vertical shaft of stone surrounded at its bottom by a round, flat surface elongated a little at one side symbolically representing Shiva and Shakti.
Lingaraja	The king of the Lingams. The famous temple at Bhubaneswar built by Jajati Keshari belongs to Lingaraja. It is one of the most famous Shaiva centres of India.
Lotus Mudra	The sittings pose where the legs are crossed so that the left foot rests on the right thigh and the right on the left thigh. This position is assumed during meditation.

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Madala Panji	The chronicle maintained in the temple of Jagannatha in Puri. It is written by the Deula Karana or the temple chronicler and usually approved by the king ruling at the time with his seal.
Madhha	An ancient unit of weight. 1 Madhha = 1/2 Tola = 40 Rati
Magarmukha	Face of the Crocodile. 'Magar' means crocodile of Ghadial type and 'mukh' means face.
Mahabharata	The famous Hindu epic created by saint Vyasadeba describing the great battle between the Pandava and the Kaurava.
Mahadeba	The supreme god. It is another name of Shiva or Maheshwara.
Mahalakshmi	The Goddesses of Wealth, same as Lakshmi. "Maha" is added to a name to attribute more emphasis and honour to it.
Mahamaya	The name of a goddess
Mahanadi	The largest river of Odisha (Orissa) which starts from a place outside the present border of Odisha at its north-west zone and flows down through the province to meet the Bay of Bengal at the eastern coast of Odisha.
Mahapatra	A very important person in the king's group of administrators.
Maharshi Narada	Saint Narada who lives in the heaven and always keeps on traveling the abode of the human, the gods and goddesses and that of the demons collecting news from one sector and conveying to the other usually creating conflicts amongst them. Narada is usually known as a master conflict creator.
Maheshwara	One of the Hindu Trinity, Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara. Maheshwara, the god of destruction is another name of Shiva.
Mahisha Mardini Durga	Goddess Durga was so named after killing the Demon Mahishasura having the body of a buffalo with the head of a human.
Mahishasura	A demon having the body of a buffalo with a human head. It was killed by goddess Durga after which she was named Mahishamardini or Mahishasuramardini.
Maitra Bana	A forest named friend. Maitra means friend and Bana means forest.
Maitreya Bana	Bana means forest and maitreya means for friends. A forest named Maitreya or a forest for the friends.
Mala Masa	There is a difference in the periods of the solar and the lunar months. Since both the systems are adopted by the Hindus for different purposes, at periodic intervals an additional month is introduced for adjustment of the discrepancy in these periods.
Mammath Bhatt	Mammath Bhatt is also known as Mayur Bhatt. He was a poet in the court of Bhojaraja and wrote "Suryasatakam" for worshipping the Sun God for maintaining a healthy and disease free life.
Mana	An ancient measure of volume especially for agricultural produce. Also a measure of area for land. One mana is almost equal to one acre of land.
Manushya	
Kautuki	The female divine entertainers or the Apsaras
Marani	A portion of the structural decoration of a temple which is indented to the inside of the temple and is slopped down gradually with the increase in projection from the temple wall, like an inverted lotus petal.
Martanda	A famous saint
Mastaka	The head. The top portion of a temple above the Rekha or Pidha is known as Mastaka.
Matangi	The fifth Mahavidya of the Dasha Mahavidya is known as Matangi
Matiyar Viyana	Earthen pots and pans and other articles
Maund	A unit of measure of the old Indian system of Weight and Measure. 1 Maund = 40 Seers = 37.3240 Kilo Grams
Mayadevi	Mother of Goutam Buddha and also the name of a goddess following which the name of the mother of Buddha was assigned.
Mitra	Friend
Mitra Bana	Mitra means friend and Bana means forest. A forest named Mitra or Friend
Mohana	Mukhashala or Porch of the temple
Mrindanga	A double sided drum like the Pakhwaj but producing sounds of different pitch than those produced by the Pakhwajat both the ends. It is made as the Pakhwaj is made and played the same way the Pakhwaj is played. However, the diameters of its both circular ends are made larger than those of the Pakhawaj.
Muchalinda	The king of the snakes as described in Buddhist epics
Mukhashala	The main entrance hall or the Porch of the temple. It is constructed adjacent to the sanctum or the main temple towards its east direction. It is also known as Jagamohana, Mohana or Antarala.
Mukunda Deba	The last king of Odisha before the State lost freedom. He ruled from 1799 AD to1818 AD.
Mukur	A journal of history and archaeology like Bishwakosh
Nabagraha	The nine planet gods the images of which are placed above the doorway of the main entrance of the temples to protect it from hazards. Out of the nine images seven represent the seven days of the week and the rest two Rahu and Ketu represent the two nodes of the Sun and the Moon. The seven Planet Gods are Sun. Moon. Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus and Saturn.
Nabakama	Naba means Nine and Kama or Karma means work. A section of a temple or any other structure in the temple complex divided in to nine further sections. The respective sections are decorated with different motifs.
Nabatala	A human figure having the total height nine times the height of its face from the chin to the top of its head. Such figures are made only in the Tretaya Yuga following the Shukraniti devised by saint Shukra regarding proportionate dimensions of different body parts to be adhered to while constructing images.

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Naga	Cobra snake
Naga Stambha	A pillar in the shape of a coiled snake of cobra variety.
Nagakanya	A female figure having the human structure above the waistline and the structure of a serpent below it.
Naltigiri	The present Lalitgiri in Jajpur District in Odisha (Orissa) near Cuttack city. It was once a very famous Buddhist centre of India.
Nanda	A dynasty of Kings and Emperors ruling Kalinga before the Mauryas.
Narasingha	
Deba - II	Usually after three generations the names of the kings are repeated. Likewise, Narasingha Deba – II was a king of the same dynasty the King Langula Narasingha Deba,who built the temple of Konarka, belonged to.
Natya Mandira	The temple where dance and music performances are held in honour of the deity of a temple complex.
Nikaya	An epic of the Buddhists
Nirankari	A religious group started by Bhima Bhoi who believed only on "Sunya Bada" and renounce the family, friends and the materialistic world.
Nrusingha / Hiranyakashyapa	Prahalada, the nephew of Hiranyakashyapa was a devotee of Vishnu. Hiranyakashyapa was dead-against Vishnu and tried to kill Prahlada. To save Prahlada, Vishnu took up the attire of Nrusingha, that is, upper half of the body as lion and the lower half as a human being and tore apart Hirankashyapa to kill him.
Odia	The language the people of Odisha speak. Previously it was being spelled as Oriya and the State as Orissa
Panda	The servitor of the temple who executes the daily activities of the temple and on special occasions. Pandas also conduct festivals and rituals of the Gods and the Goddesses.
Padma	The sacred Lotus flower, Lotus shape
Padmakshetra	The sacred lotus zone.
Padmaprusthha	The sacred plinth of a temple is known as Padma prusthha. Usually it is decorated with lotus petal shapes.
Padmasana	A sitting pose taken up while meditating. In this case the person sits on a flat surface with crossed and folded legs where the left foot rests on the right thigh and the right foot rests on the left thigh.
Padmatola Gorge	The sacred gorge in the river once flowing by Konarka on which the present temple was erected after filling it up with stone.
Paga	Pillar constructed on the exterior wall of a temple providing the necessary support to it to prevent its fall.
Pakhwaj	A two sided drum made of a wood shell and cowhide. One side of the drum is wider and produces a sound of low pitch when struck with the fingers and palm of the left hand and the other narrow side produces a high pitched sound when struck with the fingers of the right hand. The drum is slung from the neck with a string and held horizontally while playing.
Panchakama	Pancha means Five and Kama or Karma means work. A section of a temple or any other structure in the temple complex divided in to five further sections. The respective sections are decorated with different motifs.
Panchamruta	A mixture of raw cow milk, honey, curd, ghee and molasses in equal proportions and used by the Hindus in all kinds of rituals and worships.
Panchratha	One of the temple construction style adopted in Odisha (Orissa) having five pillars on each side wall of the temple. "Pancha" means five and "ratha", especially in this context means pillar. Each wall has two pillars at both corners of the wall known as Konaka Paga or Corner Pillars, one Raha Paga or Central Pillar and two Anartha Paga or Additional Pillars in between the Konaka and the Raha Paga on each side of the Raha Paga.
Pandava	Yudhisthira, Arjuna, Bhima, Nakula and Shahadeba, the individual members constituting the Pandavas, the heroes of epic Mahabharata. The Pandavas were the sons of King Pandu and his wife Kunti.
Panjika	The chronicle of the Hindus which schedules in advance all the rituals and festivals to be observed in a year and predicts all the celestial events to happen in the coming year.
Parshwa Devata	The auxiliary deities installed at the south, west and the north sides of a temple on its wall and usually within smaller temples built on to the body of the main temple. These auxiliary deities are supposed to guard the temple and its prime deity against any hazards. These auxiliary temples also add to the overall beauty of the temple and at the same time making it structurally more secure.
Parvati	The consort of Shiva
Pata	It is one constituent part of the decorative sections like Tinikama, Panchakama, etc.
Patalapuri	The universe is believed to have three places like Earth (Martya), Heaven (Swarga) and Patala which is located under the ground.
Pataliputra	The ancient name of the modern city of Patna in Bihar which was the capital city of India (Jambu Dwipa) for some time.
Patharaganda	A 'Ganda' or a gorge in the river that was once flowing by the temple of Konarka. The river was used to transport the huge stone blocks to Konarka from far off places and were being unloaded at this gorge during construction of the temple.
Patra Lata	A creeper having only with leaves protruding out of stems in symmetrical manner.
Pheni	One component of the decorative sections having the cross-section of a trapezium with the top being longer than the lower edge. The ends of the cross-section look like the hood of a snake and hence the name.
Phula Lata	A creeper having flowers and also along with leaves in some cases.
Pidha	The stepped roof of a temple. Usually the roof of the Mukhashala of all the major temples of Odisha is of Pidhha type
Pithha	The Plinth of the temple. It is also known as Upana

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Prachi	The famous and sacred river that was once also flowing by the present temple ofKonarka. Its valley was once lined many temples, monuments and monasteries of all type of religions and sects.
Prachi Mahatmya	The epic describing the sanctity of the River Prachi and its surroundings.
Prajapati	The Master of the Universe, He also determines the individual members of each couple. The prime god who is responsible for the creation of all the living beings in the universe.
Prakriti	The counterpart of Purusha or the female power responsible for creation when united with Purusha, the male power.
Prustha	The plinth of a temple. It is also known as Upana.
Purusha	Literally means male. The counterpart of Prakriti or the male power responsible for creation when united with Prakriti, the female power
Purushottama Kshetra	Purushottama means the ideal man or Vishnu Himself. The other name of Puri is Purushottama Kshetra due to the presence of Lord Jagannatha, an avatar of Vishnu in the temple of Puri.
Pusha	Another name of the Sun
Pushpaka Ratha	The aerial vehicle that existed in Satya Yuga and was used by Ravana, the king of Sri Lanka, to abduct Sita, the wife of Lord Ramachandra. It looked like a chariot and flew in the sky like an aircraft.
Raha Paga	Paga means pillar. Raha Paga is the pillar placed at the centre of each wall of the temple
Rahu	One of the nine Planet Gods usually installed on the top of the main entrance of a temple. Rahu has a ferocious appearance and as per the epics, it swallows the moon and the sun during their respective eclipses.
Rahumukha	The circular face of Rahu, it is also known as Kirtimukha and is mostly placed on the temple walls above its Bada.
Rajmahendri	A city based on the bank of River Godavari near the Bay of Bengal in Andhra Pradesh which was once the Capital of Kalinga in the ancient age.
Rakta Chandana	Red sandal wood
Ramachandi	The presiding goddess of Konarka, now installed in a temple at the mouth of River Liyakhia after the attack of Muslim warrior Kalapahada. The original temple of Ramachandi according to Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra was once located in the campus of Konarka.
Ramachandra	The mythological hero of the epic Ramayana. He is the son of Dasharatha and husband of Sita and is considered as an avatar of Lord Vishnu.
Ramakrishna Paramahansa	Though born to a middle class vaishnava family in Bengal he was later considered as an Avatar of God by his devoteesand named Paramhansa. He was the most mystic person of the 19th century India. Swami Vivekananda was his chief disciple.
Ramananda	A vaishnava saint, who belonged to the 15th century, lived mostly in the holy city of Varanasi and pioneered the Bhakti movement. Two of his famous disciples are Kabir and Tulasidasa
Ramanuja	A famous preacher and guru of the Vaishnav sect of the Hindu religion.
Ramayana	A famous epic of the Hindus based on the life of Rama, Sita and their families living in the time of Satya Yuga
Rameshwara	Located at the very tip of the Indian Peninsula on the Pamban Island Rameshwara or Rameshwaram belongs to the state of Tamilnadu, India. It is a major holy place for the Hindus and is connected to the main-land of India by the Pamban bridge.
Rani Gumpha	Located in Udayagiri of Kahandagiri-Udayagiri complex in Bhubaneswar, Odisha Rani Gumpha or Queen's Cave belongs to the 1st century BC. It is a double-storied cave complex and was being used as a shelter for the Jain monks.
Ratha Yatra	The Car Festival of the Hindus and also of the Buddhists celebrated at many places of India, the most famous one being the Car Festival of Jagannatha in Puri is celebrated in the month of June-July every year.
Rathina	A tribe traced by Henry Torrens as Vedic Aryans living in Punjab. Rathina means charioteers. The first available sketch of a Ratha was drawn by a Rathina in 1495 BC
Ravikshetra	The centre for worship of the Sun God.
Rekha	The gradually inclining tall walls constituting the roof of the temples of Odisha built over the Bada or the vertical bottom part of the temple.
Rig Veda	The oldest of the four Vedas of the Hindus
Rudra	Means ferocious. It is also another name of Shiva or Maheshwara
Sabitri	Wife of Satyabana. She is considered as a symbol of dedication of a wife to a husband and as an idol of every Hindu woman. It is said in the epics that she had once been able to make Yama, the God of Death, to return life in to his husband's dead body through her dedication and wisdom.
Sagar Dwipa	An island in the Bay of Bengal located at the south direction of Howrah.
Sahadeva	One of the five heroes or Panchu Pandava or the five Pandavas described in Mahabharata, the famous epic of the Hindus
Sajna	The daughter of the architect of the heaven Bishwakarma. Sanjna married to the Sun God and gave birth to twins named Ashwinikumar who served as medical experts to the gods and the goddesses.
Sakhi	A female companion
Sakshigopala	A place at 17 Kilometers from Puri named after the prime deity of the place Sakshigopal
Sanchi	A famous ancient Buddhist centre now located in the State of Bihar.
Sankranti	As per the Hindu religion the Sun, during the year moves through 12 astral signs. The day it starts from one sign to the other is a Sankranti. It is the first day of each solar month.

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Saptaloka	The seven upper words existing around us. There are three major lokas or worlds, namely Bhuloka (the Earth), Antarloka (the world in between) and Brahmaloka (the world of the gods and the goddesses and other celestial beings). Further dividing each of the last two Lokas by three divisions yields seven Lokas.
Saptarishi	The seven Rishis or Saints of Hindu scriptures are, Vashista, Varadwaja, Jamadagni, Gautam, Atri, Vishwamitra and Agastya who are also considered as the seven of the eight prime ancestors (Gotras) of the Brahmins.
Saptatala	As per Shukraniti, the human image carved such that the height of the face from the bottom of the chin to the tip of the forehead is one seventh of the total height of the image. Saptatala images are made only in Kaliyuga.
Saraswati	The famous sacred river that has been lost since the ancient days.
Saraswati (Goddess)	Goddess Saraswati is the Hindu goddess of wisdom, learning, music and fine arts. She holds a Vina and a book in her hands, wears white dresses and rides a swan. She is the consort of Vishnu along with goddess Lakshmi.
Satakama	Sata means Seven and Kama or Karma means work. A section of a temple or any other structure in the temple complex divided in to seven further decorative sections and the respective sections are decorated with different motifs.
Satya Yuga	The age of Truth, the first of the all four Yugas.
Seer	A unit of measure of the old Indian system of Weight and Measure. 1 Seer = 80 Tolas = 0.93310 Kilo Grams
Shaiva	Those who worship Shiva as their prime god. It is a sect within the Hindu religion.
Shakabda	A calendar system of the Persians introduced in India by Emperor Kanishka which runs 78 years behind the Christian calendar.
Shakadwipa	The ancient name of Persia or the present day Iran with a different boundary from where the Aryans migrated to India.
Shakara	The lower Barandi or the indented portion between the Bandhana and the lower Jangha
Shakta	Those who worship Shakti as their prime goddess. It is a sect within the Hindu religion.
Shakti	The prime goddess of the Shakta sect of the Hindus
Shakyasingha	Another name of Buddha before his enlightenment
Shamba Purana	The epic written on Shamba
Shambhu Kshetra	A centre of worship for the Shaivas
Shankar	Shankaracharya, the famous guru and preacher of Shaivism who took the main lead in wiping out Buddhism from India. The other names of Shiva are also Shankar, Shambhu, Mahadeba and Maheshwara.
Shankara Vijay	The scripture depicting the philosophy preached and practiced by Adi Shankaracharya, the most famous preacher of Saivaism who was the main instrument in eradicating Buddhism from India. He originally belonged to Kerala.
Shankaracharya	A famous preacher of the Hindu religion. He belonged to the Shaiva sect and played a major role in eradication of Buddhism from India.
Shankha	Conch
Shiba Samantaray Mohapatra	The Second Minister in the court of King Langula Narasingha Deba. He was popularly known as Shibei Santara. The King entrusted him with the responsibility of overseeing the construction of the temple of Konarka
Shibei Santara	The popular name of Shiba Samantaray Mohapatra, the minister in the court of Langula Narasingha Deba
Shikara	The upper Barandi or the indented portion between the Bandhana and the upper Jangha
Shilpa Shastra	The ancient scripture containing the principles of architecture and construction engineering especially in relation to the temples.
Shiva	Mahadeba or Maheshwara.
Shloka	Verses or hymns written in Sanskrit language
Shtotra	Verses or hymns written in Sanskrit language
Shukracharya	Saint Shukra, a very learned and famous saint of the ancient days who was the guru of the demons.
Shukraniti	The rules formulated by Shukracharya regarding proportionate size of different parts of the body to be maintained while sculpting statues of men, women or images of gods and goddesses in human form.
Shwetadwipa	The island of Java near Borneo and Sumatra which was frequented by the Odia sailors for the purpose of trade and commerce.
Shyamabata	A banyan tree worshipped by Sita, the wife of Rama during their exile for 14 years in the forests.
Siddhartha	The original name of the Buddha before his enlightenment.
Singhadwara	The eastside or the main entrance of a temple where two lions are usually placed on both sides of the doorway as guards.
Sita	The wife of Ramachandra , the main character in the famous epic of the Hindus, that is,Ramayana
Snana Mandapa	A raised platform where the deity of the gods and the goddesses take a ceremonial bath.
Soura	One who worships the Sun God as his or her prime god. It is one of the sects of the Hindu religion.
Spatika	Crystal
Sri Krishna	An incarnation of Vishnu is Krishna or Sri Krishna
Srikshetra	The other name of Puri where the temple of Jagannatha is located.
Subhadra	The sister of SriKrishna and Balarama or Jagannatha and Balabhadra who was married to Arjuna of the epic of Mahabharata. Subhadra is worshipped along with Jagannatha and Balabhadra in the temple of Puri.

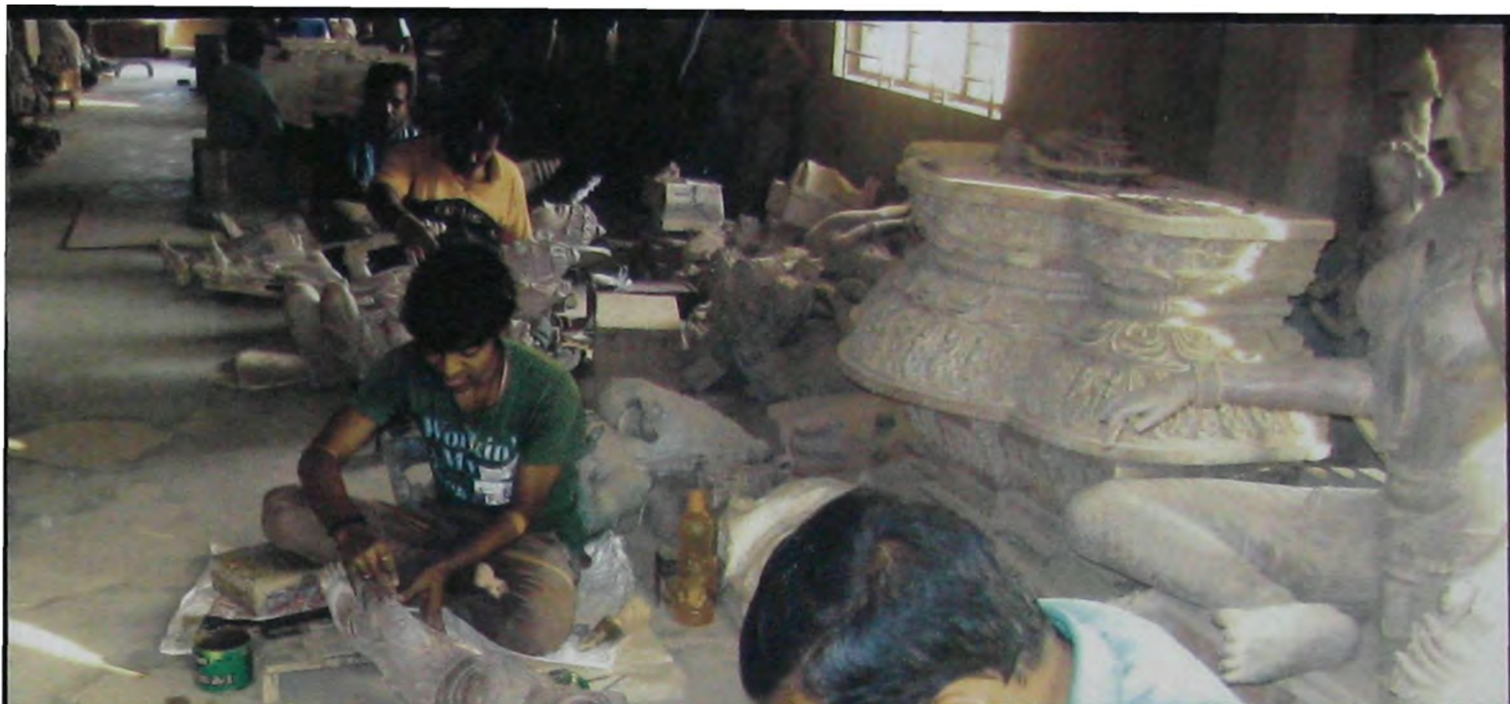
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Surya Deba	The Sun God
Surya Ganga	Another name of the sacred river Chandrabhaga
Suryakshetra	The centre for Sun worship.
Suryanarayana	The Sun God. Surya means the Sun and Narayana means God or Vishnu.
Takshasila	A place presently located between the River Indus and the River Chenab in North India. In the ancient times it was a famous seat of learning having a university to which people from all over India and also from different countries were coming to learn and teach. In those days the education of a person was considered incomplete unless he or she attends the university at Takshasila.
Tamaliti, Tamralipta Tamaluka,	It was a port-city located on the mouth of the River Hooghly presently located on the Odisha and West Bengal border area.
Tinikama	Tini or Tri means Three and Kama or Karma means work. A section of a temple or any other structure in the temple complex is divided in to three further sections and the respective sections are decorated with different motifs.
Tola	An old unit of measure of weight. 1 Tola = 11.66375 Grams of the present system and 80 Tolas = 1 Seer of the old Indian system of weights and measure
Torana	A canopy
Tretaya Yuga	As per Hindu philosophy time is divided into four sections like Satya Yuga, Tretaya Yuga, Dwapara Yuga and Kali Yuga. After completion of all the four periods they are repeated again
Tripatdhara	A decorative section consisting of three distinct sub-sections.
Trishul	The trident. It is the weapon of Lord Shiva or Maheshwara. Usually a Trident is placed atop the temple of Lord Shiva.
Upakhyana	A scripture, story or epic
Upana	The plinth or Prusthha of a temple
Utkal	It is the ancient name of the present day Orissa or Odisha of course, with a different boundary which varied from time to time under different rulers
Utkal Sammilani	An organisation founded in Odisha (Orissa) for fighting with the British to achieve independence of India.
Uttarayana	The return of the Sun after its southward journey during the year.
Vaishnav	Those who worship Vishnu as their prime god. This is a sect within the Hindu religion.
Vamana	Literally meaning dwarf, Vishnu had once taken the avatar of a dwarf or Vamana Avatara.
Vayu	Air, considered by the Hindus as a form of God.
Veda	
	It is the oldest scriptures of Hindu religion and is divided into four parts like Rig-Veda, Sham Veda, Yajur Veda and Atharva Veda. The first three parts deals with the performance of Yagna or sacrifice and the last part comprises with a collection of chants, hymns or Mantras.
Vedanta	The last part or the end of the Vedas known as Vedanta. It deals with the explanations of and procedures to be followed for the Vedic Mantras and Brahmans.
Vedic Trimurty	The Prime Gods of Vedic age, Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara being responsible respectively for creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe and its dwellers.
Vidyut	Electricity, Lightening
Vimana	In present terms it means an aircraft. It also means a carrier that is used to transport images of gods and goddesses from one place to the other during a festival. This is usually carried by four people on their shoulders. However, Vimana also means the main temple, sanctum, Bada Deula or Deula.
Vina	An Indian stringed musical instrument like Sitar. Sitar has one bulging pot shaped resonator attached to one end of the bar carrying the strings while the Vina has two such shapes attached to both the ends of the bar carrying the strings.
Vishnu	Lord Vishnu is one of the prime gods of the Hindus who took various avatars to be born on this earth for the benefit of the people. SriKrishna or Krishna is one of such avatars.
Vishnu Purana	A famous epic of the Hindus describing all that is related to Lord Vishnu.
Vishnupada	Literally meaning the foot of Lord Vishnu, it is another name of the sky.
Vyasha	A famous saint who wrote the famous epic of the Hindus, The Mahabharata.
Yadav	The milkman community is known as yadav community. They earn their livelihood by upbringing cows and selling milk and milk products to others. Lord Krishna was born to a yadav family.
Yajna	Lighting a sacred fire with figs of wood and pouring ghee and other offerings on it in honour of the gods and goddesses and other heavenly entities while chanting hymns for the benefit of the mankind
Yaksha	The semi-divine beings

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After the collapse of the *Vimana* (the main temple), all that remains of the Konarka Sun Temple (13th century A.D.) is the *Mukhasala* (the porch) through which one entered the main temple. The walls of the porch contain the finest carvings of human and celestial beings, animals and birds. The porch is suggestive of the art the main temple had. The renowned sculptor Padma Bibhusana Guru Shri Raghunath Mahapatra aspires to construct a replica of the entire temple complex near the present site with the help of other sculptors and artisans of Odisha. He intends to give a new lease of life to the heritage of Odisha's temple art and architecture.

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Sculptors and artisans at work in Padma Bibhusan Guru Sri Raghunath Mahapatra's workshop in Bhubaneswar



Replica of the wheels created in the workshop

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Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra

Born in the year 1887 to Janardana Rath and Chandramani Devi in the village of Bira Harekrushna Pur, near Puri, Pandit Mishra was adopted by his mother's sister Bimala Devi and her husband Bhikhari Mishra of the nearby village of Bira Pratap Pur. After graduating from Ravenshaw College, Cuttack in 1912 he studied in Presidency College, Kolkata and earned his Masters degree in Philosophy in the year 1914. Just before joining its faculty, being inspired by the Indian Freedom Movement, he came to Odisha to fight for India's freedom under the leadership of Utkalamani Gopabandhu Das. Pandit Mishra along with Gopabandhu and three others, namely Pandit Nilakantha Das, Pandit Godabarish Mishra and Acharya Harihara Das were regarded as the esteemed "Panchasakha" or 'The Five Friends of Odisha' who together had established a school at Satyabadi which generated many eminent and successful future leaders of Odisha. During his short span of life he wrote many books on history, some in English and the others in Odia language. 'Konarka" was written by him in Odia language purposefully as, till then, no research oriented book on temple architecture of Odisha was written in this language. It is considered as one of the best books on Konarka ever written in any language.

Unfortunately, like the temple of Konarka, Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra unexpectedly passed away very early in his life, in the year 1926.


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